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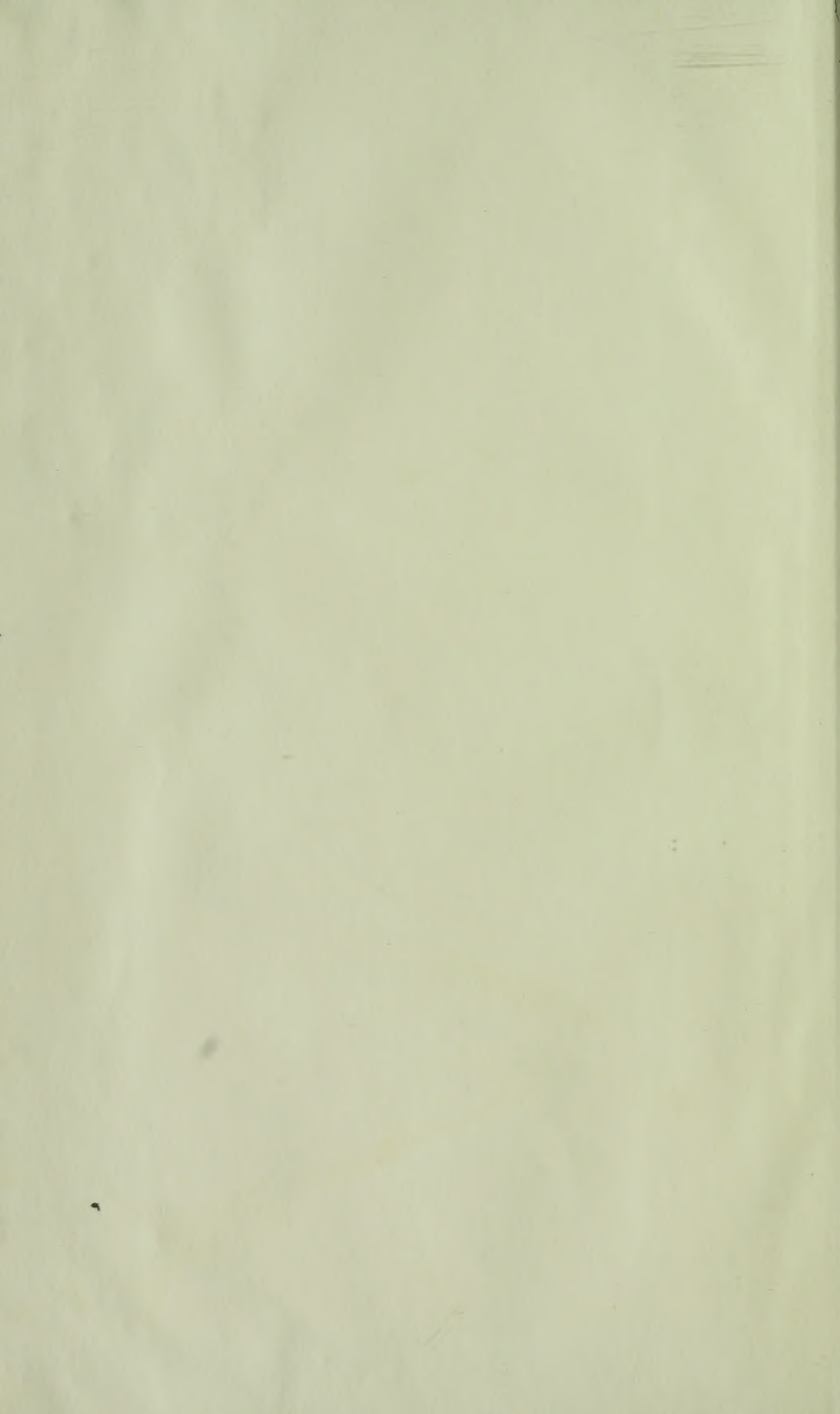
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WINCHESTER COLLEGE, C. 1450

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ENGLAND

*A History of British Progress
from the Early Ages to
the Present Day*

BY

CYRIL E. ROBINSON

WINCHESTER COLLEGE, ENGLAND

With 63 Maps and Plans and 24 Plates

THOMAS Y. CROWELL COMPANY
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PREFACE

This book pursues three aims which are, or should be, the aims of every History, great or small: First, to stir interest and appreciation, for without that all study of the past is dead and labour lost; Second, to provide material for some real understanding of historic issues, for without an inquiry into origins and motives such study can leave no permanent mark upon the mind; Third (and for students this is not the least important of the three) to print upon the memory a clear and decisive picture of the major facts.

For this last purpose it is, as I think, essential that the facts themselves should be few and simple. Selection is not easy, but to suppress the host of minor characters and irrelevant side-issues seems on the whole a wiser course than to blur the picture or produce confusion in the mind; and, if I have erred in omitting too much, it is to avoid the commoner fault of omitting too little. As a further aid to memory, the main facts of every chapter are set down in summarised form at the end of the book.

But, if it is valuable to learn the main facts, much more is it valuable to understand them. The memory of them will gain rather than lose by ample illustration and discussion. Here, therefore, there is no excuse for economy of detail; and what space has been gained by the suppression of smaller issues may usefully be given to a more generous treatment of the large. Detail is of two sorts, or rather may serve a double purpose. It supplies the means to a completer judgment, discovers the springs of human character and action, reveals the concrete beginnings from which great historical movements have been born. But, besides this, there is another gain. Detail clothes the dry bones of fact with the warm substance of reality. It will make even the dull tale live; and the trifling gossip of a Froissart or a Pepys stirs in us an interest which the vague generalisations of a textbook fail to move. Such details will not confuse the main impressions, but rather strengthen them; and so, wherever an episode seems worth mentioning at all, I have tried within the limits of my space to tell it properly.

The Maps and Diagrams have been designed upon the same principle of selection as the matter of the text. All superfluous names have been suppressed, and only those places given which are strictly relevant to the contents of the chapter.

To sift the crowded narrative of the century now past and to select the vital matter from the rest is still, and must for many years remain,

at the individual's choice. Much that is here omitted will strike critics as worth mention; some incidents may seem unduly stressed. For the considerable space devoted to the events of the Great War, I make no apology; on the rising generation their claim is paramount. More questionable, I feel, are the somewhat large digressions into European politics and wars; yet without these it would be difficult to keep in view the general trend of the century's development. The conflict of two opposed political ideals is the key, if key there be, to a comprehension of the bewildering period; and, if we are at all to realize what England has achieved in it, our perspective must be broad.

The task of recording what is still so new and as yet so ill-defined must be hedged about by many pitfalls; and I am therefore the more fortunate to have received the help not only of Mr. A. T. P. Williams, who revised my whole manuscript, but also of Dr. W. H. Davies and Mr. C. Sankey, who have revised the proofs of the more recent chapters. I am much beholden to these and other friendly critics, through whose aid I trust that, if not all, at least many of the pitfalls may have been avoided here.

PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

The republication of this History of England, besides the advantage of producing it in a single volume, has afforded the opportunity of making several improvements in the original. In the first place, I have made a careful revision of the chapters, and, with the aid of several friendly critics, eliminated, I hope, all errors of positive fact. Some passages I have rewritten in the light of recent publications; others I have expanded, dwelling more particularly upon Anglo-American relations, and adding an entirely fresh chapter upon the events of the last six years. Secondly, I have added in an appendix a list of books suitable for the use of students who desire to extend their reading further—novels and stories as well as definitely historical works. Lastly, the text has been embellished by plates illustrative of English life and manners at various epochs. After careful consideration, I have chiefly selected for this purpose portraits of historic personalities and photographs of ecclesiastic and domestic architecture. The best key to the character of any age is to be found in the faces of its sons, and in the manner of their building.

January, 1928.

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PART I
EARLY AND MIDDLE AGES
TO 1485

CHAPTER I

THE ROMAN CONQUEST

Consider how the world stood three thousand years ago, one thousand years, that is, before the birth of Christ. Egypt was already an old country—old as her pyramids—having grown civilised and powerful under a long line of Pharaohs. King David ruled in Jerusalem; and Agamemnon (so the poets say) in Greece. Rome as yet was not; but the gods were just then beginning to cast a thoughtful eye upon her seven hills. And Germany, Austria, France, Spain, what of them? History is silent. These countries had neither Kings nor Pharaohs: even their very names did not exist. For, truth to tell, Europe north of the Alps and Balkans was still in a strange, unsettled state. Its plains and forest-clearings were then the scene of comings and goings so frequent and continuous that permanent boundaries were scarcely recognised, cities a thing unknown. Tribes wandering, like the Israelites on Sinai, came with their flocks and herds, their wives and children, and settled for a space wherever ground was vacant or where the old inhabitants were too few or feeble to resist their coming; but sooner or later, after a long sojourn or a short, they would depart as they had come. Trekking gipsy-like with wagons or caravans, marching by day, camping by night, and fighting whatever enemy they might encounter on their path, they would check at neither mountain range nor forest nor broad river in the search for a new home in the unknown lands beyond. By what impulse these tribes were urged upon their restless travel we cannot altogether tell. Sometimes, no doubt, crops failed or pastures were exhausted; sometimes they followed the rumour of richer lands elsewhere; sometimes, too, the approach of still more formidable wanderers drove them unwillingly to flight. More often still, perhaps, they would grow tired of a too familiar valley or the tame routine of a too peaceful life; and the spirit of adventure, the Wanderlust, would come strongly over them, driving them forth again. One thing is certain: when they moved, their movement was almost invariably one way. They came from the east; and from the east others were pressing on their tracks. So the tide flowed westwards, over the German forests and across the Rhine—until it brought some to a permanent anchorage on the fertile fields of France, carried some northward to the marshes of the Rhine-mouth, or southward over the Alpine passes into the Lombard plain; while others yet again (whether the first-comers or the most adventurous of them all) still followed the setting sun, until upon the very shores of the Atlantic they were checked and came to a stand.

Early Migrations.—Yet not altogether to a stand; for, where a ship may swim, a man will go, and it was in British lands across the Channel that many of the wanderers found their final home. Some thousand years or more before Christ, the first wave of these invaders reached England's shores. Centuries passed; and fresh tribes followed in their wake (at the very time, as some think, when their fellow hordes were descending from the Apennines to the sack of Rome, and when only the vigilance of the sacred geese availed to save the Capitol in 390 B.C.). To these newcomers a large portion of the island—from its southeast coastline deep up into the Midlands—fell a prey. The name they bore was Brythons, or the Painted Folk; and from them the Romans gave the island its first and oldest name, *Britannia*. Once again, shortly before the Roman occupation, another wave of immigrants settled upon the Hampshire coast. But it was the last: Rome had conquered Gaul; and her legions began to garrison the frontier of the Rhine. So the flood was stemmed. Four centuries later it was again to rise beyond control, burst the dam which held it back, and plunge the whole of Western Europe, and even imperial Rome herself, under the ruin of its destructive tide.

It is not easy to picture Britain in those early days before the Romans came, but Roman writers have told us something; scholars and archæologists have filled the gaps. The men who came in this way to Britain were in some sort kinsmen of those whom they left settled upon Gaul. Both were of the stock which we call Celts. The true Celt is tall and fair. If you should meet a Scot with red hair and light blue eyes, you may know that he still carries Celtic blood in his veins. The Britons then for the most part were such tall, fair men: but not all. When they reached the island, they had found there men of a different race, black-haired, swarthy, and squat. This stock has not yet quite died out; and if in Wales among the mountains you should discover a native dark as no Englishman is ever dark, then you may shrewdly guess where his ancestry began. With this short dark race of old inhabitants, the fair newcomers mixed and intermarried; so the two types blended, and the pure Celt became rarer in Britain than in Gaul. What language these folk talked, we know well enough. It is talked still (though time, no doubt, has changed its form) in many parts of Wales, and till yesterday among the fisher-folk of Cornwall. Gaelic and Irish, too, are offshoots of the Celtic tongue, and in Brittany French peasants still use a speech much like it; which shows that in this point equally Gauls and Britons were not far apart. In character they were the same, an excitable, impulsive race, furious fighters, when the mood for battle was upon them, but falling easily, when the mood passed, into idleness or despair. Their resistance when once broken died quickly down; but when the first legionaries of Rome came over, they fought them with that reckless élan which still marks the French soldiers of to-day.

Ancient Britons.—It must not be imagined that the Britons were

utter savages like the Maori or Hottentot. They knew, and practised in Cornwall, the art of working tin ore out of rocks; they had gold and silver coins of their own. They traded in tin and other merchandise with Phœnicians, Greeks, Romans, and such-like adventurers from overseas. But, though a convenient harbour such as London gathered round its quay a tiny settlement of huts, the Britons had no proper towns. They lived in simple hut dwellings, dotted among the forests in small groups, and, since most springs were in the uplands, generally on high ground, tilling the land not unskilfully and breeding herds of short-horn cattle. Different districts were held by different tribes and each tribe had its chief; and, as often as not, each tribe was at war with its neighbour. When serious danger threatened, the tribesmen would foregather in some central fastness. This lay usually deep in a forest, or high upon some down. On many a hilltop to this day may be seen the crude circular embankments that protected it. Like most early peoples, the Britons were very superstitious and lived in terror of their Druid priests. Stone-circles formed their temples; and there were many such up and down the country. The most important and central was at Stonehenge on the Wiltshire plains. Many tracks led to it from north and west and east and south; and you may still trace them winding deviously along the summit of the downs. How the huge stones were brought from a distance and set up in their double ring, or how the massive lintels were raised into their place, we do not know; nor can we tell precisely what ritual was there enacted. The god whom the Britons worshipped was undoubtedly the sun; and his chief festival was fixed for midsummer day at dawn. Druids decked in long white robes stood ranged about the altar waiting for the moment when the sun's rays should top the low horizon and, passing between a pair of upright pillars, strike the central slab on which the victim lay. At that moment the victim died—a human victim in all likelihood. For the Druids were cruel folk; and in Gaul, at any rate, it was their practice, even in Caesar's time, to place live men in a monstrous wicker cage and then set the whole edifice on fire. Like "medicine men" of the Southern Seas, these priests sat firmly on the necks of the poor deluded people; they hated all progress and enlightenment, fearing for their own power; and for the same reason they hated the Romans too. Frequently they tried to stir up revolt in Gaul; and not least among the motives which led to the second invasion and final conquest of these shores, was the resolve once and for all to see this sinister and rebellious influence rooted out.

Two Roman Invasions.—To the Romans Britain seemed a faraway mysterious country, much more remote from them than India is from us. To their poets it was Ultima Thule—the other end of nowhere, and they even believed that winter there was one long continuous night, and other fables of the sort. Nevertheless, as Rome began to cast her net of empire wider, Britain came presently within its reach. Once Carthage had been beaten, Rome's territories had grown apace. Spain

had fallen to her first; then Greece, North Africa, Asia Minor, and the Syrian Coast. In four years of swift campaigning, Julius Caesar had overrun the length and breadth of Gaul. It was Britain's turn next; and in 54 B.C., after a brief reconnaissance of the previous year, Caesar landed in the neighbourhood of Deal an army over 15,000 strong. With such forces he may, perhaps, have intended the conquest of the island; he certainly wanted to explore it; but his more immediate object was to teach a lesson to the British princes who had been sending help to Gaul. Chief among these was Caswallon, a name which the Romans after their fashion translated to Cassivellaunus. He ruled a wide district just north of the Thames, and to him in their peril the rest entrusted chief command. For the moment they were thoroughly scared and stopped fighting one another. Nevertheless, when Caesar reached the coast, there was not a Briton on the cliffs. He pushed up into Mid Kent, and here on the River Stour he found their armies gathered. He easily dispersed them; but meanwhile a disaster had happened to his transports. A storm had caught them at their moorings and broken them on the coast. A halt was called; and when the damage was repaired, Caesar marched his army forward to the Thames. Here, at the ford of Brentford, he found the Britons strongly posted on the northern bank, and ensconced behind sunken rows of sharpened stakes. The legions, however, were fine infantry and as much superior to the undisciplined natives as English regiments to Zulus. Undaunted they dashed into the water shoulder deep, and driving the enemy back, entered Caswallon's territory. Caswallon himself fled to his fastness in the woods. But Caesar had not the time to waste on guerrilla warfare; and when an offer of submission came, he was content to leave the island, imposing a nominal tribute and taking hostages for good behaviour. Once back on the mainland, his hands were full enough with a succession of revolts in Gaul, and civil war with Pompey nearer home. For the time being Britain was left alone. Neither Augustus nor Tiberius, the first two Emperors, had time or men to spare from other frontiers; the third, Caligula, was mad; and the glory of adding that island to the Roman rule remained for the Emperor—fourth of the House of Caesar—Claudius.

Claudius was no general, but merely a vain and somewhat foolish man. So when in A.D. 43 (nearly a century from Caesar's time) he came in person to see the launching of the new campaign, he played in it no leading part. Unwilling presumably to risk his precious person too long in such outlandish climes, he stayed but a brief fortnight, then hastening home to celebrate his triumph, left to his officers the long and tiresome task of reducing the savage peoples of that unknown inhospitable land. It was a task calling for Roman pluck and Roman perseverance to accomplish. Britain was not good campaigning ground. Even the southern districts from Kent through Hampshire, as far as the Dorset downs, were then covered by wide belts of beech forest: and the further north you might go, the wilder grew the country, and the

roads degenerated into mere moor-land tracks. The Britons themselves were not an enemy to be despised; and in the last resort they would always take to their native hills. Nor were they ill-armed: even on their first crossing out of Gaul they had brought with them the science of fusing tin and copper into bronze; and the advantage of bronze weapons had doubtless helped them much in defeating the earlier inhabitants armed only with their rude implements of stone. But since that day the Britons had further acquired the use of iron: and like the hosts of Sisera, their chief warriors entered battle in formidable chariots, from the wheels of which long scythe-blades protruded upon either hand. They would even run nimbly out along the shaft-poles or fight hanging from their horses' necks. To increase the terror of their charge they dyed themselves bright blue with woad. Yet, woad and chariots notwithstanding, the Romans made rapid progress in the south. Aulus Plautius, the Emperor's veteran commander, soon drove the enemy back beyond the Thames, and in a decisive battle, under the Emperor's eyes, broke their resistance on the Essex plain. The tribes of East Anglia, Kent, Sussex and the Midlands yielded and made terms. But though Claudius might hold his triumph through the streets of Rome, the conquest was but half complete. Caractacus, the British chief who sat on Caswallon's throne, had escaped from the battlefield and taken refuge among the Welsh mountains. Under his leadership the Welsh tribesmen set Plautius at defiance, and it was left for his successors to carry the Roman arms to the Irish sea.

Boadicea's Revolt.—The Romans were expert soldiers, and very systematically did they set about their work. Three military bases were planted on the borderland of Wales: first at Wroxeter (or in Latin *Uriconium*) on the upper Severn; then at Caerleon (*Isca*) at the Usk mouth in Southern Wales; and finally at Chester (*Deva*) in the north. Military roads were built to link these up; and at length after long campaigning, Caractacus was successfully laid by the heels. He was sent in chains to Rome, where he lived out his life, an exiled patriot. The reduction of the Welsh, however, still hung fire: it was not until the year A.D. 60, that Suetonius Paulinus determined to strike at the centre of resistance, Mona or Anglesey, the traditional home of the Druid priests. Starting from Chester with a fleet of barges built upon the Dee, he forced a landing on the island, butchered the priests on their own altar stones, and cut down their sacred groves. But this work was scarcely finished when terrible news reached him from East Anglia. Here a recent decree, displacing the local prince, had driven the natives to despair. Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, had even been scourged for offering resistance. She had answered by raising the standard of revolt, and the whole country was aflame. There were in the southeast of England three Roman towns of some importance—London (*Londinium*), Colchester (*Camulodunum*), and St. Albans (*Verulamium*); all three fell into the insurgents' hands: and the Roman settlers were massacred, men and women alike, with horrible tortures.

It was said that 70,000 persons perished. For Paulinus the situation was critical in the extreme: cut off from his base, in the midst of a desperate and revengeful people, he must have felt much as the English in India felt when the Mutiny began. Swift action was his only hope. He reached London marching day and night; found he could not hold it, and began to fall back towards Chester. On the way he was attacked



FIG. 1.—BRITAIN UNDER EARLY ROMAN OCCUPATION.

by Boadicea's men. The queen herself took personal command: "tall and forbidding, keen of eye and harsh of voice, with a golden chain about her neck, and the red hair flowing to her hips," she appeared to give her eager troops the last harangue. But, for all her eloquence, the day was lost, and she herself took poison to escape a harder fate. The suppression of her revolt marks a turning-point in the story of the British occupation. Though severe measures were needed to recall the natives to their senses (and indeed it was a century or more before the

land of the Iceni recovered from the fearful devastation it endured), these measures were effectual. It is as though the Britons had staked their last throw, and having lost acknowledged their defeat. Even the Welsh tribes agreed to some temporary peace. Britain was won. Another province had been added to the empire which embraced within itself the whole of the civilised world; and though for future governors of Britain there were many risings to crush and work enough to do, they needed not henceforward to question the real security of their power.

CHAPTER II

ROMAN AND BARBARIAN

Rome was something better than a greedy conqueror or a harsh mistress. In her own world she played a part much the same as England has played in India for a hundred years. Rome played hers for four hundred. Wherever she conquered, she went on to civilise: and what she had civilised, she had still to hold, checking upon her frontiers the still chafing tide of restless barbarian enemies. So upon the men sent out to govern her outlying provinces there fell thus a two-fold duty. The ideal governor needed to be both soldier and civilian at one time; and it was fortunate for Britain that shortly after Boadicea's great revolt such a governor came out from Rome. In A.D. 78 Cnaeus Julius Agricola was appointed to the island. Of his work we have a detailed record written by his son-in-law, the historian Tacitus. This is for us no trifling gain; for in more ways than one Agricola laid the foundations on which his successors built.

Agricola in Scotland.—When Agricola arrived in Britain, it was plainly his business to decide where the northern frontier line should run. Sooner or later there was bound to be trouble from the north. The Roman province, as he found it, stopped short at the Humber and the Dee. Beyond these rivers the dales of Yorkshire and the northern fells were occupied by the Brigantes, a wild tribe which had hitherto been left practically alone. Agricola had large ideas: he soon overran the Brigantes' country; but not content with this, he crossed the Lowland border, pushed up to the Forth and Clyde; sent a fleet cruising round the Orkneys; and even defeated the "Caledonians" in pitched battle beyond the Firth of Tay. When, however, on the morrow of the fight, he saw the smoke of burning villages clouding the horizon, and knew that the natives were taking to the heather, he must have realised what it would cost to subdue such a people in such a country. In any case, he led his army back; and from this time onward the narrow isthmus between the River Tyne and Solway Firth became the accepted frontier to the north. Besides its narrowness (the span is 73 miles as the crow flies), this line, if strongly held, had one great advantage;

standing midway between the untamed tribes of the north and the half-tamed, but still unruly Brigantes to the south, it might serve to keep the two from combining against Rome.

This double purpose was still kept in mind when in A.D. 120 the Emperor Hadrian visited Britain and began the building of the Great North Wall. This famous defensive work faces both ways. Towards Scotland a deep trench and a high wall shut out the northern enemy. The wall, at first no more than a rude pile of turfs, but later rebuilt more solidly in stone, is in many places standing yet. It is a formidable barrier. Every four miles there is a camp or barrack for a thousand men; at every mile a guard house, and at each quarter of a mile a tower. Behind the wall ran a road linking the camps; and south of the road, facing the Brigantes, is again a ditch bordered by two mounds. As the Brigantes quieted down, the southern defences fell into disuse; and upon their site a regular town sprang up—a thin, straggling town, as Kipling has described it, 80 miles long measured from sea to sea. Here were taverns, shops, temples and places of amusement, and much else to make life tolerable for the luckless garrison thus exiled at the world's very end; for here thousands of men and officers, drafted generally from foreign legions, spent weary years keeping their unbroken watch or sallying forth to fling back the Picts or Painted Men (as the northerners were called) when these came against them over the heather. Once, indeed, shortly after Hadrian's time, an attempt was made to shift the frontier further north; and a wall was constructed between the Forth and Clyde. It was soon abandoned, and the frontier which Agricola and Hadrian had chosen remained the barrier line until the evil day came and there remained no legion on the Wall to hold it.

Roman Civilisation.—But no Roman governor spent all his thought upon the frontier or all his time upon the Wall. He had the peaceful natives of the south to think of as well as of the Picts. And here, too, Agricola paved the way for his successors. He started schools and brought schoolmasters over from abroad to teach the little Britons Latin. He enticed their fathers out of their forests and marshes by building them brand-new towns with temples, market squares and colonnades. He taught them to adopt Roman habits and even the Roman dress. But nothing did more perhaps to civilise the island than the roads which Agricola and others built. Without proper means of communication no country can thrive; and nowadays, when a new colony is to be "opened up," surveyors are sent out to plan a railway. The road was the Roman's railway; and not in one respect, at least, so unlike a railway either. For a Roman road plunged across country straight as a die, turning neither to right hand nor to left for hill or valley or river. It is a puzzle why such hilly travelling should have been preferred; and some would have it that Roman chariots had fixed axle-trees, and that for this reason twists and corners had to be avoided. But whatever the cause, their roads, with all their faults, were good roads, so solidly and deeply laid that even in Tudor times, after thirteen centuries of

PLATE I



REMAINS OF THE ROMAN WALL SHOWING A MILE FORT



STONEHENGE SEEN FROM THE AIR

Plan of Hadrian's Wall - Four Mile Sector.
(not drawn to scale)

NORTH

Ditch

Towers Towers Towers Towers Towers

CAMP

MILITARY ROAD

SOUTH

Walls

Gate

House

MOUND

DITCH

MOUNDS

Firth of Tay

Firth of Forth

R Clyde

LUGUVALLUM (Carlisle)

CORSTOPITUM

R Tyne

BRIGANTES

EBORACUM (York)

DEVA (Chester)

LUNDUM (Lincoln)

WATLING

URICONIUM (Widewater)

ISCA (Caerleon)

GLEVUM (Gloucester)

AQUAE SULIS (Bath)

VERULAMIUM (St Albans)

LONDINIUM

WINE STREET

STREET

POSE WAY

ISCA (Exeter)

CALLEVA (Silchester)

Mountainous Districts

Wooded Districts

ROMAN BRITAIN.

FIG. 2.

¹ These names, clearly not Roman, were given to the roads by the barbarians who in later centuries made use of them.

and with such a service trade could flow easily in and out of Britain; and along with trade came new ways of life and new ideas. Not least among them Christianity itself, brought in by missionaries before the province was a century old. And, when many years later in 324, the Faith was proclaimed the official religion of the Empire, Britain, though slow to abandon her old gods, seems to have shared it with the rest. This act was due to Constantine the Great, himself a Briton's son. Thus in a small measure was Britain able to repay the debt of gratitude she owed to Rome.

Not all the civilisation in the world can make white men out of yellow men or black; and it would have needed nothing short of a miracle to turn Ancient Britons into Romans. Still Rome did her best. After three centuries of Roman rule Britain had been taught many of her virtues, and not a few of her vices. The island had undoubtedly progressed. The natives had in part abandoned breeches and taken to the toga, just as modern negroes do the opposite (how strange a thing is progress!). Many of them talked Latin; the more vulgar, as archæologists can tell us, even scrawled it on the walls; one workman finishing a brick scratched "satis" across it, as a coolie with a word or two of slang might write "fed up." Then too they enjoyed the full advantages of Roman trade; and, just as India buys trinkets from Birmingham and cloth from Manchester, so they imported from overseas quantities of cheap, but shoddy ware, far uglier than the products of their own native art. Their towns were fine pretentious places, as the remains dug up at Silchester disclose; so were the "villas" or country-houses in which well-to-do Britons lived. These houses, like those unearthed at Pompeii from beneath the ashes of Vesuvius, had fresco paintings on the walls, and fine pavements patterned with small bright coloured stones. They even had bathrooms fitted with elaborate contrivances of subterranean heating. Some say Rome was ruined by hot baths. But more than all this they enjoyed the decency and order and good discipline of Roman life. They got full justice, though strict, in the Roman courts, far better than the doubtful justice of their own tribal laws. The Druids too were gone: weeds and mosses grew on the stone-circles; even the Roman temple had become a Christian church. But, for all that, the days of Britain's peace were numbered, and a cloud already loomed on the horizon. As early as 286 the raids of the Saxon pirates had begun; and ruin was coming, more slow indeed than the disaster which was Pompeii's end, but which was yet to blot out Rome's work in Britain more utterly than all the ashes of Vesuvius.

For Rome was drifting towards her fall. Already she was herself a "house divided." Shortly after Constantine the Empire split into two halves; one being ruled from Constantinople, the city which he had refounded and renamed; the other from Italy. Upstart emperors fought and intrigued for power. Yet at this very moment the menace of the barbarian hordes upon her frontiers was yearly growing greater. The call for men elsewhere than Britain was urgent. Legions were

summoned for defence or "borrowed" by ambitious claimants to the throne. An official, called the "Count of the Saxon Shore," maintained for some time the defence of the southwest coasts; but little by little the island garrison dwindled. In 407 the last legion left. Britain was defenceless, and at the time when Alaric with his Visigoths was sweeping over Italy, and the Franks had crossed the Rhine, she too fell a prey to other enemies. The eagles gather quickly round the carcase. Out of the Highlands came the Picts, from northern Ireland (which was then their home) the Scots; and, most dreaded of them, over the seas from the German coasts came a swelling flow of Saxon pirates. Britain made what fight she could; but, though in the arts of peace she had been well schooled by Rome, one lesson had been neglected—the necessary art of war. And now it was too late.

Elsewhere, as here, Rome's power perished, but not her work. On the Continent, her influence outlived her. The Franks and Visigoths were wise in their generation. Already long since they had known Rome: living on the borders of her Empire, and trading with her merchants, they had learnt to admire her culture, while they despised her waning strength. So, when their hour of conquest came, they stayed their hand. Of Roman customs, of Roman laws, and even of Roman speech, much was suffered to remain. Alaric adopted the civil laws of Italy; Constantine's methods of government were taken as a model by Charlemagne, the great Emperor of the Franks; Latin, as spoken by the Gauls, became the Frankish tongue which we call French. And so, in one way or another, the tradition of Roman ways and Latin speech—much changed indeed, but Roman still—was preserved among her conquerors. From them the Normans took it, when centuries later they settled down in France: and thus with William's conquest that tradition went back to Britain once more; but it went to a country where it had been completely lost. The Saxons had blotted it out utterly. They had destroyed all traces of the Roman occupation as if it had never been.

Think of the great Roman cities so famous in their day. Silchester, Uriconium, Corstopitum, upon the Wall—what are they now? Bare acres. Except London, York and Exeter, no city was spared; though many, at what date we do not know, were re-inhabited. Such Britons as were not killed or (what seems to have been less usual) kept in the service of the conquerors, were swept out of their comfortable homes, pushed away into the wilds of Wales or Cornwall, or driven to a precarious refuge in the Fens. With them went the old arts and culture, the old ideas of law and justice, the old security of settled government. All the things that Rome had stood for vanished; and not least among them Christianity itself. England for nearly two hundred years was a pagan country. The twilight of the Dark Ages settled over it; and kings reigned here who could neither write nor read—who had never even heard the name of Christ.

Anglo-Saxon Invasion.—This second conquest of Britain was not

like the Roman conquest, an affair of swift campaigns and systematic generalship. It was a slow piece-meal penetration, costing many long and painful years to conquerors as well as to conquered. Those of the marauders who lived nearest, might perhaps have made shorter work of it, had they had a mind. But booty was all they asked; and once the haul was complete, the Picts returned again to their northern homes; and the Scots went back (for the time at least) to Ireland. It was only the Saxons who came to settle; and for them it was no such easy matter to discover the weak points in the island's defences, to transport their hosts, to summon reinforcements, and still less to bring over wives and families to their new homes. For the North German coasts, from which they came, were 300 miles distant; navigation was not easy, and in winter-time the seas are rough. So, in fact, it was a great while before these German tribes could call Britain their own. From the time of their first permanent settlement down to the time when their final victory drove the last Britons into the hills of Wales, it was a century and a half.¹ Speaking in round numbers, the process of these occupations lasted from A.D. 450 to A.D. 600.

They began with the southeastern coasts, and this, when we come to think of it, was natural. The Britons of the south were feeble and less capable of resistance; they had known peace too long. Their lands were better tilled and the plunder richer. The landings, too, up the Thames, in the Solent, and elsewhere, were more accessible than in the stormy north. So we find that the first comers landed in the Thames estuary at the Island of Thanet, and settled down in Kent. These were Jutes from Jutland—of German stock like the rest. They came under Hengist and Horsa as hired allies to a British king; but seeing the richness of the country, they stayed to conquer those whom they had come to help (A.D. 449). After Kent, Sussex, where, as its name shows, Saxons settled. Next, other Saxons, pushing up Southampton Water, overran the country from Hampshire towards the west and called it Wessex. At the same time as the conquest of the south was being completed, the move against the east coast began. East Saxons occupied Essex; Angles occupied East Anglia, settling in two parties called the Northfolk and the Southfolk. The less inviting land, north of Humber, alone remained of the seaboard: this was seized by other Angles in A.D. 550 just 100 years from the first arrival of Hengist and Horsa. They called it Northumbria. Thus, starting from Kent, the conquest crept along the south coast westwards; then, starting from Essex, it had crept up the east coast north. Finally, the Angles, still unsatisfied, pushed up the Trent valley into the interior; and there in the Midlands founded the kingdom which they called Mercia. But as yet they had

¹ The British historian Gildas (540) asserts, however, that the invaders spread rapid ruin right to the west coast, and then retired only to return *later* to settle. This view is corroborated by the fact that such places as Bath seem to archaeologists to have been destroyed long before the date given by the later evidence of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle.

not reached the Western Sea; and meanwhile the resistance of the Britons seems to have stiffened. They were fighting now with their backs against the wall; and they made their last stand in two famous battles. At Deorham in Gloucestershire they were finally defeated in the south, and falling back into Wales they were cut off from their



FIG. 3.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE ANGLO SAXON OCCUPATION.

comrades of Devon and Cornwall (A.D. 577). A second defeat at Chester (613) had a similar effect; and with that British resistance was at an end: their tribes lost touch. Unity had never been a strong point with the Britons, and even when the enemy was at the gate they had squabbled. Unity was impossible now; and the scattered remnants of these Celtic peoples, while they succeeded in maintaining themselves in

the Welsh hills, were incapable of winning back what they had lost. Yet even so it was to be long years before they were brought under the rule of England. They have remained always in some sense a people apart; and even to this day the character of the Welsh recalls their British ancestry. In their love of song, their passionate, changeful and poetic temperament, we can still discern the nature of the Celt.

King Arthur.—Legend has it that in the south-west the last stand of the Christian Britons against their pagan conquerors was made by King Arthur and the Knights of his Round Table. Mediæval writers such as Malory, who wrote the “*Morte d’Arthur*,” have embroidered on that legend, making of this Arthur a prince of chivalry and a champion of an ill-used, distressful folk. Tennyson retold the story in verse in his “*Idylls of the King*.” It is a beautiful story, but it has no real place in history. Knights in armour who spent their days in jousting and doing noble deeds, cannot have existed in the sixth century A.D. Yet the legend has this much truth in it that it depicts a struggle between the forces of Christianity and heathendom. The victory of the Saxons has altered the whole course of English history; and there is a deeper meaning than appears in the words of the dying Arthur, spoken as the ship of the three queens bore him to his rest in the island valley of Avilion:

The old order changeth, yielding place to new.

CHAPTER III

THE ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS

The Angles, Jutes and Saxons were, so to speak, the backwoodsmen of Europe. They had lived too distantly from Rome to feel her culture, as the tribes of the Rhineland border did. In their far-away homes on the wild flats of the North German coast, they fell under no spell of hers. They were just what a rough life in a rude climate had made them: tough, self-reliant, brave, and of a dogged perseverance, very different from the excitable valour of the Celt. The only trades they understood were how to farm and how to fight; and they governed themselves by the light of a hard experience won among the forest marshes, on lonely islands or in scattered creeks. There is small wonder that their coming opened a new chapter in England’s history.

The Invaders from Germany.—That they were Germans, their language testifies—the language which we ourselves inherit from them. English is, of course, a mongrel speech: a large part of it came to us from the Norman French—that is from Latin. But its oldest words and the words which we use most often perhaps in our daily talk, are Anglo-Saxon words—and the Germans use them too in theirs. The man whom they call “*König*” we call “*King*”; “*day*” with us is

“Tag” with them; “father” and “Vater” are not two words, but one. In short, both languages are at root the same; and though time has changed a vowel here, or softened a guttural there, an intelligent German would read the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle without a crib. So the Anglo-Saxons—let us make no mistake about the point—were Germans; and we must needs believe that what Caesar and Tacitus and the old legends tell us about other German tribes, was largely true also of them.

Anglo-Saxon Customs.—They were a fierce, adventurous people; cruel to their own kin: for cowardice in war was punished with a barbarous death by drowning; cruel to their enemies; for often, like the Israelites at Jericho, they would vow every captive to the sword. They were great hunters with hawk or dog. They loved dicing and deep drinking, and not least among the pleasures of Valhalla, whither dead Saxon warriors were supposed to go, was the prospect of an everlasting and unlimited carouse. Their religion was heathenish and gloomy, albeit in its mild way, romantic and even beautiful. It told them of witches and evil spirits haunting the forests; of wild storm maidens and of kindly but misshapen dwarfs. What is most strange is this: that whereas most nations, like the Greeks, gave beauty to the gods they trusted, these northerners did not. Their chief divinity was the one-eyed Odin, with Frig his wife and Thor the Thunderer his son,¹ and there was many a legend, telling of the deeds of Odin’s family, how Thor with his hammer did battle against wicked giants, and how Balder the invulnerable was slain—to the great sorrow of the gods—by the crafty Loki with a dart of mistletoe. Dark and savage certainly was the creed they owned; and dark, savage lives these Anglo-Saxons led; yet one virtue redeemed much—the treatment of their women-kind. Woman was to them almost a sacred thing; and this in a world where women had seldom received much respect. The Greeks despised them, giving them no liberty, and often killing a female child at birth. Even the early Romans kept their wives and daughters in the background. But the Anglo-Saxons honoured them both in public and in home. In short, it was from these grim barbarians, rather than from the civilised nations of the south, that there sprang that noble idea of chivalry and reverence for the weak which has always been the peculiar virtue of the English race.

Among the Anglo-Saxons the family was everything. The very word “home” (for which some nations, like the French, have no true equivalent) is theirs. So blood-relations clung together; and in theory at least all the members of a tribe were kinsmen, just as in a Scottish clan. When such a tribe, needing a head, chose for itself a chief, they would proclaim him “head of the kindred,” or in their own language, “king.” To this king they would swear allegiance; and henceforward all must serve him when the kindred goes to war; till his lands for

¹ From the names of the Anglo-Saxon gods most of our week-days take their titles: Tuesday is the day of Ti or Tig; Wednesday the day of Woden (another form of Odin); Thursday is Thor’s day; and Friday the day of Frig, Odin’s wife.

him if he requires it; and when the tribe collects for the assembly, or "mote," as it was called, they acknowledge the king as natural president. But, it must be remembered, they, the mote, chose him, and not he them. He is their president and not their master: it lies properly with them to settle the guilt of a criminal, or decide a policy—not with the king. More and more, no doubt, as time goes on, they will tend to leave in his hands the business of keeping order, punishing offences, and enforcing fines. Yet the king is still, in theory at least, the people's servant; and though at death he may nominate his own successor, it rests with them to accept or refuse that nominee as king; sometimes (as in Edward the Confessor's case) the dying king's nominee was not accepted. All this was something new in England, when the Saxons came; and, if it is not democracy, yet it is perhaps the germ out of which democracy has grown.

At times it is very tempting to regret the passing away of Rome. There is something grand and solid about that gigantic system whereby half the world was governed as one realm. But, if any thing is certain, it is this, that unless the power of the Roman had perished, and the Saxon stepped into his place, England could never have become England. For see the difference between the old order and the new. Under the Roman Empire all power and authority resided in one man, the Emperor. All roads, as the proverb says, lead back to Rome; and every official in like manner was the Emperor's servant: to him the provincial governor referred all questions on which he stood in doubt; by him all appointments were conferred, and by a stroke of his pen cancelled; even the criminal who appealed unto Caesar—"unto Caesar he must go." By the Emperor's rule and justice his subjects were defended against the tyranny or wrong-doing of their neighbours; but in accepting the advantages of his government, they had forfeited the liberty of governing themselves. The Anglo-Saxon idea was different. It had its faults and dangers, it is true. Kings gathered great power into their hands, and often abused it greatly. [But deep down somewhere in men's minds the new idea still remained firmly rooted—the idea that the king is the people's appointed minister and not simply their master. The English love of liberty—the belief in a man's right to order his own life and have his say about the way in which he shall be governed—all this we owe, in part at least, to the sturdy independent spirit of these early Anglo-Saxon tribesmen.]

Nevertheless, in times of war, discipline must be strict and the authority of a commander strong. So, naturally enough, in the years when the Anglo-Saxons were fighting their way up into the heart of England, the power of their kings increased. [Furthermore, as the new lands fell to the invaders and were parcelled out among the members of the tribes, large shares would often go to the more noble, the king's favourite warriors it might be, or those who were reckoned to be the leaders of the tribe. They were known as Eorls, and they became very powerful in their turn. For them the lesser men, or Ceorls, had often to work;

and on their advice the king was wont to order his government, summoning them to his council of Wise Men, or (in the Anglo-Saxon) Witcnagemot. So the common folk among the kindred became gradually of less account, and the general mote fell into disuse.

The Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms.—Scores of such tribes, as time wore on, established themselves under their several kings upon the coasts and inland districts. At first the kingdoms were but isolated realms: generally they acted quite apart, and not seldom there was fighting between tribe and tribe. Gradually, however, some king more powerful than his neighbours, would gain the upper hand, and bringing the weaker kings under his own allegiance, would establish a wide control. Three main kingdoms in this way arose in England. There was Northumbria in the north, Mercia in the midlands, and Wessex in the south. Between these three in their turn a contest for the supremacy began; so that for two hundred years it was uncertain which should be the head, or how England was to become once again a single and united country. It remained for Wessex to achieve this unity; but it was Northumbria which made the first attempt.

The battle of Chester had scarcely been fought and the last of the Britons driven back on Wales, when there arose on the throne of Northumbria the greatest of her kings. Edwin (c. 620) carried the arms of the northern kingdom into every quarter of Britain: he beat back the Picts across the Lowlands and founded Edwin's Burgh on the rock where it now stands; he captured, and gave the Angles' name to the island of Anglesey; then, turning south, he brought Mercia, East Anglia, and even Wessex under his sovereignty; and in virtue of his conquests took the proud title of Bretwalda, the "wielder," or overlord of Britain.

Mercia, however, was not beaten yet. Penda, its heathen king, scornful of the shallow zeal of the Northumbrian Christians (for Edwin had been converted to the Faith), renewed the battle: Edwin himself was killed and his kingdom overrun. There followed a hard-fought struggle; and it was not till the old King Penda died, and his son forsook his father's gods for the new faith, that Mercia forged ahead. Then indeed the Midland kingdom went from strength to strength. Northumbria was humbled and in 726 even the power of Wessex was temporarily broken. Thus, just one century from Edwin's time, the Mercian monarch became Bretwalda with as good a right as his. For many years the house of Penda flourished: King Offa (he who built on the Welsh frontier the great dyke which bears his name) was the most brilliant of the line; and even Charlemagne, the great Emperor of the Franks in Gaul, treated him as an equal.

But on Offa's death the star of Mercia began to decline, and the star of Wessex rose. From Charlemagne's court, where he had been in exile, Egbert came home to Winchester and there was crowned. He was not idle long, and very soon restored Wessex to her place. It was in 825 (just another hundred years from the time when Mercia's supremacy

began) that Egbert fought and defeated her at Ellandun. Bretwalda in his turn, Egbert gave a unity to Britain which was to last far longer than the rule of the two rival kingdoms. Winchester became the country's capital, and so remained until the Norman Conquest; and it was there (if we may trust the story) that Egbert first gave to the country thus united the name of Angle-land or England. So just as from the time when the last Romans left it took two centuries to complete the Anglo-Saxon conquest of the island, so it had taken two centuries again to give to its government a permanent and settled shape, and to find a common name to mark its unity.¹

Yet, strange as it may seem of so uncivilised a people, this political unity could scarcely have been accomplished without a religious unity to back it. England could not so easily have become one nation, unless it had previously become one Church. For, superstitious as the men of those days were, they cared much for their religion. The Britons had fought their pagan invaders with twice the bitterness they would have felt for a Christian foe. And when in their turn the Anglo-Saxons were converted, we can at once mark the influence upon their lives. The acceptance, however partial, of the Christian ideals of kindliness and forgiveness was bound to work some change in men whose standard had hitherto been almost the direct opposite of these. Religion became a key to policy. One king would make common cause with another, because they both were Christians, or for the same reason, having defeated him in battle, would temper his victory with unexpected mercy. So it meant much to Egbert (and still more to Alfred later on) that England was a Christian country when he began to rule. Its conversion was in this wise.

Roman Missionaries.—When the Britons were driven from their lands, Christianity, as we have seen, went out like a lost star. A spark, it is true, still lingered with the hunted remnant among the hills of Wales; but, though these sent out missionaries westward, and though St. Patrick's genius won over Ireland to the Faith, yet they made no effort to convert their heathen conquerors. The Saxons were considered beyond the pale: Christianity was too good for such as they. But Rome thought otherwise. Though no longer the head of a European empire, she was still the head of a European Church; and shortly before the time when Edwin succeeded to the Northumbrian crown, she turned her attention to this benighted corner of the continent. Gregory, first of the great Popes and founder of the Papacy's vast power, had seen (in days when he was still a humble priest) certain English children in the slave-market at Rome. And noting with kindly clerical humour the "angelic" look on their handsome Angle features ("non Angli," he

¹ Egbert was not, of course, King of England in the same sense that William I or Henry VIII were so. He did not attempt to displace the local kings of Mercia, East Anglia or Kent: these continued to rule their own countries, but only as vassals to Egbert. The extent of the power which he, as Bretwalda, exerted over them, depended largely on his personal character and on theirs.

said, "sed Angeli"), he vowed to win their country for the Church. As Pope, he made good his vow. In A.D. 597 he sent Augustine and forty others to preach the Gospel to England.

The task of these missionaries was less difficult, perhaps, than might appear. The Anglo-Saxons were already growing tired of Odin and the old pagan faith. It taught little that might help them in the struggle of this life, and of the life to come still less. The horror and mystery of death weighed heavily on their heathen minds; and a creed which could remove all doubts came like a dawn out of the night. Story tells how one Anglo-Saxon monarch (it was Edwin of Northumbria himself) welcomed the comforting promise of the Resurrection. Much in doubt, he had called a council of his chiefs, and when others had spoken, one old chieftain addressed this parable to the king: "It will often happen that when supper is set in the hall at winter-time, there comes a sparrow through the door, escaping the cold and storm outside. For a brief space the bird has pleasure in the warmth and the glow of the firelight; then, passing out again into the darkness, it is gone. Such truly is man's life: a brief space of light and happiness; darkness before and darkness after. None is certain whence man comes or whither goes—except these preachers with their strange new story. Therefore let us follow them." And with that the King was won: to such arguments as these the priests of Odin had no answer.

So, when Augustine and his forty friends landed in Kent upon the Isle of Thanet, they were well enough received. Aethelbert, the King of Kent, the most civilised part of the island, had lately married a Christian wife from France, and was not unwilling to lend an ear to their message. In long procession, chanting litanies and carrying aloft "a great silver cross and the image of the Saviour painted on a board," they approached Aethelbert's capital, where they were welcomed and allowed to settle. In due course the King was converted; and the most part of his people followed the King's lead. At Canterbury, on the same site where the Cathedral stands to-day, a Christian church was first raised. A few years later a fresh missionary from Rome converted Wessex. It remained only for the Gospel to penetrate the north; and one Paulinus was sent out from Canterbury to the Northumbrian court of Edwin. He came at an apt moment; Edwin had but newly married a Christian princess from Kent, and events favoured Paulinus' mission. On the very same day that his queen bore him a daughter, Edwin himself had a miraculous escape from an assassin, one of his courtiers throwing his own body between the King and the blow of the poisoned knife. With pardonable superstition, Edwin put both blessings down to the potency of Christian prayers; and at length, after discussion with his chiefs, he was himself baptized; the high-priest took horse to York and there with his own hand broke down the heathen images and altars; and the people, like those of Aethelbert, somewhat tamely following suit, Paulinus baptized them by thousands at the time. But lukewarm pagans are apt to make lukewarm Christians; and when

the heathen armies of the Mercian Penda overran their country, their new zeal vanished as rapidly as it had grown. Even Paulinus fled.

Celtic Missionaries.—The permanent conversion of Northumbria was not to come about through Canterbury from Rome, but from a different source. The Church which the banished Britons had carried into Ireland, had still an important rôle to play. The Celtic Christians, great missionaries though they were, felt, as we have seen, no call to carry the Gospel to the heathen Saxons; they turned, as was natural, to the heathen Celts. Off Mull, midway upon the western coast of Scotland, there lies a little island called Iona. This desolate rock had been chosen by the Irish Saint Columba as a good centre for preaching to the tribes of the Scottish mainland. A church had been built and a small community of hermits flourished. Now, when in due course Northumbria recovered from the Mercian inroads, and when word came to Iona asking for a teacher who should win back the people to the Christian faith, the Celts did not hang back. Old scruples were at once forgotten, and one of the monks, Aidan by name, went over. Like Columba, Aidan too took up his quarters on an island; and from Lindisfarne, or Holy Isle, as it was called, the second conversion of the Northumbrians was achieved. The Mercians, when King Penda died, threw in their lot with them.

Thus, where Rome had failed, the Church of the Ancient Britons had succeeded. The North was their conquest, as the South was Rome's. But unhappily the two Churches had long since drifted apart; and, as Churches are wont to be, they were sharply divided upon points of detail. The priests of the north shaved their heads one way, the priests of the south in another; then, too, there was a difference about the Calendar, and Lindisfarne was keeping Easter Day when Canterbury had only reached Palm Sunday. Mere trifles it may seem, but the fact is that the two Churches were mortally jealous of each other. The quarrel was at once so sharp and so absurd that Oswy, the Northumbrian king, summoned a conference. It met at Whitby on the Yorkshire coast (A.D. 664), and after much debate, the words of Christ himself were quoted (not for the first time nor yet the last) in Rome's support: "Thou art Peter and on this Rock will I build My Church . . . and to thee will I give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." St. Peter is reputed to have been Rome's first bishop, and Oswy shrewdly remarked that if Peter were doorkeeper in Heaven, he would be an ill enemy to make, and therewith decided in Rome's favour. So the northern Church yielded to the south; and England became spiritually dependent upon Rome. It was well the quarrel ended so: small good could have come at this date by cutting off the English Church from the rest of Europe; still less by leaving it divided within itself. Once the breach was healed, good order and harmony soon followed. Theodore, a Greek monk from Tarsus, St. Paul's birthplace, was appointed Archbishop by the Pope. He soon reorganised the Church, defined the

Bishops' sees, allotted parishes to the priests;¹ and even succeeded (such was his power) in causing rival kings to patch up their feuds. Unity meant strength to kings and countries no less than Churches; and the days were coming when unity was to be sorely needed. England had once again (and for the last time) to face a heathen enemy—the Danes. Egbert himself could barely hold them in check and even Alfred came too late to save the North. Yet the nearness of their peril drew Englishmen together, and under the very stress of combat with a common enemy they became more closely knit in one allegiance to both King and Church alike.

CHAPTER IV

ALFRED AND THE DANES

The long peninsula of Denmark and the rugged Scandinavian coasts which face it across the Skager Rack, had long been the home of a people who, in many ways, bore close resemblance to the Anglo-Saxons, their old neighbours. Danes or Vikings² they called themselves; but to their enemies they were often simply the Norsemen, Northmen, men out of the North. That name became a terror to Western Europe, and through two centuries the litany of prayer went up: "From the fury of the Northmen, Good Lord deliver us."

Originally it was Charlemagne's fault. When the great Emperor of the Franks, pushing his kingdom from France across the Rhine, and from the Rhine to the North German coast, came into collision with this people, he awoke a hornet's nest. Threatened by land, they took to their natural element, the sea; and, once they had tasted the pleasures of foreign conquest and adventure, nothing would quiet them down. For two centuries they were the scourge of every seaboard country. No land was safe. Sometimes it was the French coast, where their settlers grew into a nation and became the Normans of history. Sometimes they passed Gibraltar, raided the coasts of Italy, and even penetrated the Sea of Marmora itself. They actually ventured, sailing by way of Iceland, to the unknown continent of the Western ocean. But their most natural, as also their nearest, prey was England; and bitterly did England suffer from them. Having come to plunder, they stayed (as the Anglo-Saxons themselves had stayed) to settle, and as years passed, so the menace grew. In Charlemagne's time, when Offa was on the throne, we find them sacking Lindisfarne, a tempting prey with all its treasures, and putting the monks to flight. By Egbert's reign they are harrying the Dorset coast. Aethelwulf follows Egbert; and now

¹ These early Christian priests took the place of the old pagan priests, often as mere appendages of some local magnate. It would be an error to suppose that any elaborate parish system was thus early put in force. But Theodore's organisation was an advance upon the old Celtic system of roving missionaries.

² Viking meant "warrior."

they are pouring over, no longer in scattered bands, but in one great united host. Four sons of Aethelwulf tried each in turn to check them and failed. Then Alfred, their young brother, aged twenty-three, took up the struggle. He came none too soon. England was falling to pieces; such unity as Egbert had given it was fast vanishing. Already Northumbria had fallen. The Danes possessed the north. East Anglia



FIG. 4.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE ALFRED'S DANISH WARS.

was overrun and Edmund, its Christian king, cruelly murdered. Tied to a tree, he had been shot through with arrows, a death which won him the title of saint and martyr and (in later years) the monastery of Edmundsbury to mark his grave. But meanwhile the Danes had passed onward: in A.D. 871, the first year of Alfred's reign, they were fighting south of the Thames, and it looked as though nothing could save Wessex—least of all a boy of twenty-three.

But Alfred was no ordinary man. He had large ideas, cool courage,

tireless energy, and, above all, he possessed the secret of command. If a thing had to be done, he did it himself. Was it an enemy to be attacked, there was Alfred, "charging uphill like a wild boar" against the shield-wall. Was it a book to be translated from the Latin, he would work upon it with his own hands, sitting late into the night. There was no false modesty about him: and he thought it no shame even for a king to watch the baking of an old wife's cakes. That is the sort of leader that men will follow anywhere. But besides being a great warrior, Alfred was much else: a student learned in books; a keen hunter and sportsman; a lover of music and the arts; not least, a firm friend and genial host, taking always particular delight in the company of travellers and such as had any knowledge to impart. To all this he added a faith, deep, practical and manly. He was none of your Christian monarchs who went to hear the mass of a morning and bullied their subjects in the afternoon. Wherever he went, man and boy, he carried about him a book of psalms and prayers; and, what is more, he conned it. Among his closest friends were priests and bishops; yet they learnt perhaps no less from him than he from them; and, when his chance came, he did much to make Christianity more real in England. But his first years were rough years, and for such work he could spare but little thought.

Methods of Invaders.—The Danes were pressing Wessex hard; and, in the dark days that were coming, it needed all his faith to keep his own heart high and his followers from despair. His country was singularly ill-prepared to meet the blow: at almost every point of warfare the Saxons were outfought. No fleet existed, and the Danes were free to make a landing where they chose. They came coasting in undecked long-boats, single masted, with a dragon at the prow carrying a big square sail and rowed by a crew some hundred and fifty strong. Pushing up some creek it was their habit to build a stockade to guard their ships, then scour the countryside till they had collected horses enough to mount their men. With these (though their actual fighting was always done on foot) they would then sweep down upon some inland town, plunder it and burn it. The towns could seldom hold out till succour came, for they had no walls; and, even when the army gathered, the odds were still against the Saxons. Mere numbers availed them little. For the Danes usually stood on the defensive; and the Saxon peasant, armed only with shield and spear, went down like chaff before the Norseman clad in mail shirt and stout steel helmet and wielding his terrible two-handed axe. None but the King's own body-guard was able to meet him upon equal terms; and these were far too few to play a decisive part. All this not even Alfred could remedy in a day, but throughout his reign he worked hard and continuously to reorganise his country's forces; and before he died he left her far stronger than she had ever been before.

First, he built a fleet of ships larger and stronger than those of the Danes, capable of meeting them before they reached the shore.

Secondly, he gave to many towns their first permanent defences; not indeed walls of stone, but strong palisades of timber-baulks. Last and not least, he made of the army a far more formidable force. That army consisted, as we have said, of two separate parts. On the one hand there was the King's bodyguard, drawn from the nobility or leading men called Thegns, to whom the King had granted lands, and who were bound to do him military service in return. Their weakness lay in the fewness of their number, and this Alfred remedied by drafting in among them the braver and more prosperous farmers of the middle class. The bulk of the host, however, was the militia of raw peasant folk, which in Anglo-Saxon was called the Fyrd. In their case the trouble was this. The peasant could not be in two places at one time: he might fight the King's battles, or he might till the land, but he could not do both; and it was therefore difficult for a King to keep the Fyrd in the field for many weeks together. Accordingly, Alfred divided the peasantry into two equal parts: one half, when war broke out, was to gather to the King, the other half remaining at the plough; then, at a convenient interval, their places were exchanged; the first half returning to their farms, while the other half came out to fight. But such reforms took time, and, long before a fraction of them was completed, the storm had burst: the Danes had thrown their full strength on Wessex, and Wessex was fighting for her life.

Flight and Victory.—In the campaigns which followed, two points stand out—the extraordinary rapidity of the Danish blows and the black treachery of the Danish conduct. The enemy never neglected the opportunity of springing a surprise; and they never scrupled to break a promise. In the first year of his reign Alfred, much against his will, was compelled to buy them off: a breathing space was thus obtained—the Danes retired into the north. Four years later, however, they returned to the attack: they started from their base at Cambridge, marching by dead of night, swept down through a peaceful and unsuspecting Wessex, and seized Wareham on the Dorset coast. When Alfred collected his forces to blockade them there, they talked of peace and then in the night broke truce and were off to Exeter. Alfred followed and once more they promised peace. Next year (A.D. 878), without warning and in the depth of winter, they were out again: they broke into Wiltshire, fortified a camp at Chippenham, and began to harry the country side in all directions. Wessex was in a panic: at such a season no levy could be quickly raised. Many nobles fled; and the King with his immediate followers was obliged to retire into Somerset. His case seemed desperate indeed; but Alfred was not beaten. On an island in the Athelney marshes he gathered his forces to him; and, when spring was full, he marched north against the Danish camp. The Danes moved out to meet him; and at Ethandun (now Edington), just south of Chippenham, they were defeated in a great battle and driven back on their stronghold. After two weeks' siege they surrendered upon terms. As a pledge of good faith, Guthrum, their leader, was bap-

tized a Christian (Alfred would take no less), and a solemn promise was given to leave Wessex unmolested. This time the promise was kept.

Ethandun marked a turning-point in Alfred's fortunes. By this single blow one half of England was recovered. The north and east, it is true, were left to the enemy, but Wessex and Mercia were Alfred's. A compact signed with Guthrum, and known as the Treaty of Wedmore, fixed the boundary line between them. It ran diagonally across the Midlands from London up to Chester, roughly following the course of Watling Street, the old Roman road. North of this line the country remained in Danish hands, and was called the Danelaw. South of this line, England, ruled by Alfred, prospered and grew strong. And when in the last years of his reign, a fresh Danish host from France came over under Hastings, Alfred was ready. He had much hard fighting to shake the enemy off; but his reforms had borne their fruit. His fleet did excellent service on the seas; and his improved army routed the Danes by land. As a final stroke he caught them napping upon the River Lea where it flows into the Thames just below London. He built a boom across the river-mouth and trapped their fleet entire. The Danes now learnt their lesson, and they troubled England no more while Alfred lived. He had saved half England, and what is more, the half that mattered most. In the century that followed, the Danes were absorbed into England and became Englishmen. England was not destined to be a mere colony of Scandinavia: and that was Alfred's work.

Alfred's Work.—Some men in history have been great in war: others in peace. Few have been equally great in both. Pitt would probably have been a failure on the battlefield: and Wellington was but a poor hand at politics. Alfred was one of the rare exceptions. Like Caesar and Charlemagne, he combined the qualities of a wise ruler with those of a skilful general; and, in the fifteen years which intervened between Guthrum's defeat and Hastings' attack he had full opportunity to show his gifts. He used it well. He found the country in an evil state; its people ignorant, its priests idle, its judges lax. All this he set himself deliberately to change. As in war, he began by setting a high example in his own life; he never spared himself. Here is what Asser, his friend and great admirer, wrote of him: "In the meantime the King continued to carry on the government, and to exercise hunting in all its branches; to teach his workers in gold and artificers of all kinds, his falconers, hawkers, and dog-keepers; to recite Saxon books, and especially to learn by heart the Saxon poems and to make others learn them; and he alone never desisted from studying most diligently to the best of his ability; he attended the mass and other daily services of religion; he was frequent in psalm-singing and prayer at the 'hours' both of the day and of the night. . . . His bishops, too, and all ecclesiastics, his earls and nobles, minstrels and friends, were loved by him with wonderful affection; and their sons, who were bred up in the royal household, were no less dear to him than his own. He had them instructed in all kinds of good morals; and among other

things never ceased to teach them letters day and night." Single-handed, however, Alfred could never have effected one half of his reforms. Aware of this, he lost no time in gathering round him the best brains in England; he even summoned men of piety and learning from the Continent and gave them posts of honour in Church and State. There was no scholar, teacher or ecclesiastic but was welcome at his court in Winchester.

With such helpers and advisers Alfred was able to carry his projects through. He revised the laws of the realm, incorporating among them (with a quaint fidelity to Scripture) large extracts from the book of Exodus! In these early times the old stern law, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," was the traditional principle.¹ It was a strict code; but Alfred always allowed appeal to his judgment-seat; and his verdicts, like Solomon's, were the admiration of all comers. In money matters Alfred was even more practical. Having counted up the revenue derived from his taxes and estates, he set one half aside for purposes to be described hereafter; the other half he divided equally between the improvement of his army, the entertainment of his guests, and the upkeep of his workshops. About all arts and crafts Alfred was an enthusiast; he encouraged invention and even made with his own hands a contrivance for telling the hours of day—a simple arrangement of six tallow candles measured into lengths and enclosed in lanterns of transparent horn. His favourite art was jewellery; and near Athelney a beautiful specimen of this work has been dug up. It is an enamelled figure of a king and bears the inscription, *ÆLFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCAN*, "Alfred had me worked." He must have carried it with him to his retreat among the marshes.

But the chief and most anxious concern of the King's mind was education: and to this the second half of his revenues was in part devoted. The need was urgent. Only very few could read or write: the priests themselves who read the Latin services in Church could not understand them. "There was not one south of the Thames," says Alfred, "who could render the Epistle out of Latin into English." So he started schools where such as wished might learn English letters and, if fit, Latin too. Good books were scarce in those days; so Alfred collected old Anglo-Saxon ballads, and translated out of the Latin two books on philosophy and religion. He first set men to compile a history of his country; it began with the coming of the English, and was continued after Alfred's death until the Conquest. It is called the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; and without it we should know but little of these distant times.

Monasteries.—There yet remained, however, other monies to be

¹ Fines were the favourite form of punishment: and in Alfred's code of laws we find a regular tariff for injuries to the person: for a front tooth 8 shillings, for a grinder 15 shillings, a cleft chin-bone 12 shillings, thumb struck off 30 shillings, shooting finger 15 shillings, its nail 4 shillings, little finger 9 shillings, its nail 1 shilling.

spent, and for a Christian king one clear duty to perform. The welfare of religion and the salvation of men's souls lay under his special care. Now among the many institutions of the Church there was one which came to be regarded as the keystone of them all—the Monastery. To ourselves it appears incredible that the right way of serving God should be to escape the world. A thousand years ago Christians thought otherwise. They believed that a life given up to prayer and psalm-singing and pious thought, and spent in the renunciation of the pleasures of the world, possessed a double virtue; not only did it offer a sure refuge from the vice and cruel violence of the times (and evil, bitter times they truly were), but it also served as a standing witness of God's presence in an evil world; it ministered, like the angels' song in Heaven, to the Glory of God on earth. So men became monks; they left their home and family, often while still mere boys, and devoted themselves to the religious life. Gathered with a score or two of like-minded people, they lived out their lives apart from other men; read, taught, or wrote in the secluded cloister; held their services by themselves (independently of the public and the parish priests) in the great monastic church; and, if ever they passed beyond the walls of their confinement, did so only to till the soil or tend the sick. It was a strict life; yet to make it stricter the monks of Italy and France were wont to take a vow of lifelong obedience to the rules laid down by some great and pious leader.¹ The seven rules of St. Benedict were the most popular, and these had a large following on the Continent. But in England men were slow and loath to take such vows, and most monasteries preferred to go their own ways independent of such rules. As a result discipline became lax; the monks were no better than they should be, and the chief purpose of monastic life was thus in danger. So at least thought Alfred when he came to found his monasteries. Two he built himself (one in the Isle of Athelney), a third he planned to build at Winchester. But the task of filling them was not so easy; men who would take the full vows of Benedict were not forthcoming; and Alfred was actually compelled to bring them over from abroad. Had he lived longer, more might have been done; but it was left for others to carry on the work which he began. More than half a century later, when monasticism was sinking rapidly toward extinction, Dunstan, the great Archbishop, showed himself a stern opponent of all lax half-hearted ways. Forty new monasteries of the Benedictine rule were founded; and men who were not willing to take the vow were simply replaced by those who would. Thus purged and reinforced, the Church grew stronger. Enriched by vast gifts of land or treasure which Alfred and other monarchs, anxious about the salvation of their souls, had showered upon them, the abbots and bishops acquired great influence. Even reckless kings and lawless nobles bowed to the commands of mother Church;

¹ Monks thus bound by vows of obedience to a rule were called "regulars," from the Latin word "*regula*" = a rule. Other clerics, not so bound, were known as "seculars".

and the superstitious people, cowed by the threat of eternal punishment hereafter, or won by the pious example set before their eyes, began to mend their ways. The Church became a power in the land second to none.

It was left for Alfred's son, Edward the Elder, to build the new monastery at Winchester. Despite all his energy and courage, Alfred's own strength was spent. Throughout his life he had suffered much from a strange disease which no doctor was able to cure or even diagnose. In A.D. 900, being only fifty-three, he died. His reign had lasted close on thirty years. Its first quarter was spent in mastering the Danes; the second and third in quiet government and wise reform; and, though in the last quarter Alfred was troubled by still further war, he left England at peace. And when, just one thousand years before Queen Victoria's death, his short life came to a close, he knew that it had not been spent in vain. If one man more than another has the claim to be called the country's founder, it is he.

CHAPTER V

SAXON, DANE AND NORMAN

At Alfred's death, England was left divided—as it were a bone under dispute between two dogs—the south saved indeed by the Saxon, but the north still firmly in the Danish grip. For a century and a half the struggle was prolonged, now one side prevailing, now the other, until, just when the issue appeared to have been clinched and the Saxon's victory won, there stepped in a third competitor, and from under the very noses of the rival disputants the Norman took the prize.

The story of this struggle between Dane and Saxon is long and wearisome, the names and details grievously confusing. But from among those kings of Wessex who recovered (if only for a time) the lost provinces of the north, three stand out: Edward, the son, Athelstan, the grandson, and Edgar, the great-grandson of King Alfred. The first overcame the Dane's resistance; the second crushed their most determined effort at revolt; the third succeeded in winning their loyalty and trust.

Reconquest of North England.—Edward the Elder soon buckled to the task which his father left him. Bit by bit he fought the Danes down. They were now no longer the formidable foe of previous years, having settled down with wives and families to farm the land, yet in a scattered fashion, and serving no common king. So, when Edward pressed into their country, built strong forts or "burghs" upon their borders (just as they in the past had built against his father), and thence began to harry them by constant raids, the tables were soon turned. The Danes were not for fighting to the bitter end: they had homes to save and, rather than lose these, they asked for terms. Before

he died Edward had them at his feet: he received full homage from the princes of the north and east, and even Constantine, King of the Scots, acknowledged him as "father and lord" (A.D. 925).

But, though beaten, the Danes' spirit was not crushed: and under Athelstan, Edward's son and successor, the new vassals soon revolted. A large host of rebels took the field, the Northumbrian Danes being joined not only by Constantine from Scotland but also by brother Vikings from the Irish coast. They met Athelstan at the unidentified Brunanburgh, where a tremendous fight took place. Years after it was called the "great battle," and the grand old ballad, "the Song of Brunanburgh," went down on the pages of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:

Here King Athelstan	: of earls the ruler
of heroes the ring-giver	: and eke his brother
Edmund the Atheling	: long lasting glory
won in the battle	: with the edges of swords
near to Brunanburgh	: the shield wall they close
they hewed the war-lindens	: with leavings of hammers. . . .

	There lay many men
with spears done to death	: heroes of Northmen
over their shields shot	: as eke the Scottish
weary, of war sad	: Wessex men onwards
the livelong day	: in their companies
foot prints followed	: of loathed peoples
hewed they the runaways	: behind terribly
with swords milled to sharpness.	

Five kings and six earls were slain among the enemy. The rebels scattered to their homes. The victory of Athelstan was complete (A.D. 937).

Edgar Conciliates the North.—None the less, as others succeeded to his throne, the Danes would again and again "believe their oath" and make a bid for liberty; so that each new king had in turn to make good his claim to the supremacy by force of arms. Yet persuasion goes deeper than force, and little by little through these troubled years, the wise government of the English kings was converting the rebellious Danes into loyal subjects. Their leaders were admitted to the king's council-board as members of his Witan: some were entrusted with wide provinces to govern. Even the Archbishopric itself was given to a Dane. When he became a good Christian the Dane was well on the way to becoming a good Englishman too; and the Church had an important and useful part to play in binding the two hostile races into one. Archbishops had great weight in the councils of the kings: and none more than Dunstan, famous in legend for his numerous encounters with the Evil One, and worthy to be reckoned in his day the foremost man in England. The king he served was Edgar (A.D. 959-975); and Edgar, guided by Dunstan's wise advice, did more to bring Saxon and Dane together than any king before him. He even angered his subjects of the south by the mild treatment which he showed the north; but his

policy bore good fruit. The tale is told how once he gathered his northern vassals to Chester and, summoning six princes on to the royal barge, caused them to row him down the River Dee. The tale is at least a symbol of newly won harmony. With Edgar at the helm, and with Dane and Saxon pulling side by side, England seemed to have voyaged beyond the tempest and to be heading a straight course for calmer seas.

So indeed it might have seemed; but, on a sudden, fickle fortune veered, and everything went wrong. Blow after blow fell, till all that Edward, Athelstan and Edgar had accomplished, went utterly to shipwreck. First Edgar himself died, cut off in his very prime; then his elder son was murdered after the briefest reign, and the kingdom, passing to Ethelred, his younger son, fell to a fool, and a weak fool at that. To cap all this, there broke out once again, more fiercely now than ever, the old terror of the Norse invasion. Olaf Trygvasson, prince among pirates (owning the finest name, as I think, in English history), began to make descents on the eastern coasts. There was worse to follow; for Olaf presently was joined by Sweyn, the King of Denmark. Sweyn came at the head of a strong well-found host; for Denmark was now a settled and united realm, and, when it went to war, its power was far more dangerous than the independent piracy of chance adventures which Alfred had to face. And there was no Alfred now. Ethelred the Redeless, or Unready, would, as his name declares, take neither "rede" nor counsel in the hour of peril. He ordered the third psalm to be sung daily in the churches and proceeded to buy off the Danes with gold. No worse step could have been taken; the Danegeld (as this blackmail tax was called) served only to whet the enemy's appetite; and the oftener the English paid the Danes to go away, the sooner did the Danes return to ask for more. Ethelred bled England white to meet this tax; but the tale of his folly was not yet complete. Learning that certain Danes who had settled in the south were leagued with the enemy from overseas, he sent out a secret order for their massacre. On St. Brice's day (12th Nov., 1002) the order was carried out; and large numbers of Danes were murdered in cold blood. This outrage brought swift vengeance. Sweyn came over once more and harried England right and left. For ten years the terror grew: more raids, more Danegeld, and again more raids. Canterbury was taken and the Archbishop made prisoner; and, when sufficient ransom was not forthcoming, the Danes in a drunken fury dragged their hostage out and pelted him cruelly to death with the marrow-bones from their feast. The king himself made no protest; but his people, tired of their long agony and Ethelred's futility, had reached the limit of their patience. They offered the crown to Sweyn. Ethelred fled (A.D. 1013).

King Cnut.—Thus the fortunes of the struggle shifted; and a century's work of diplomacy and fighting was undone by the weak ways of a single king. Hitherto it had been the Saxons of the south who led, and the Danes of the north who followed. Now south and north alike, seeing no other choice but endless warfare, preferred a Danish king.

And when some six months later Sweyn fell dead in a sudden fit, they offered the kingdom to his son, Cnut. Only the inhabitants of London, already the richest, most powerful, most independent of English towns, upheld the claim of Edmund Ironside, Ethelred's true heir. Edmund's resistance, however, was soon broken and, contriving to get this rival murdered, Cnut reigned himself as England's undisputed king. He was a great monarch: emperor is hardly too big a name to give him. Besides England and Denmark, which were his, Scotland did him homage; and even Norway was brought under his heel. Yet Cnut never used his power to ill-treat or humble England; he ruled her rather as Englishman than as Dane, and by whatever means sought to win the loyalty of his Saxon subjects. He took Ethelred's widow as his queen; he gave Saxon nobles a liberal share in the government, enlisted Saxon warriors in his bodyguard of "house-carles," and (with piety unlooked for in a Dane) bestowed many priceless gifts on the English Church. Under such government the country thrived afresh; its trade was prosperous, and its people, now for the first time after many years, enjoyed peace. Cnut was of the stuff of which great rulers are made; and, had his sons been like him, the course of England's history would have been strangely altered. England would have remained under the crown of Denmark, and Danes, not Normans, would have had the shaping of her destiny.

Norman Intrigues.—But the strong hand with which Cnut had driven his native country and his English province upon a single rein was wanting in his heirs. Between the two of them, they soon lost their hold on England; and, when they died, the English Witan went back to Alfred's line and offered the crown to an Englishman (A.D. 1042). Their choice, as it so happened, could hardly have been worse; they little knew that, in taking Edward the Confessor, for their king, they had taken a Norman in disguise. By birth half-Norman—for he was Ethelred's son by a Norman mother—he had already spent more than half his life in Normandy, flying thither with the rest of his family after his father's overthrow. Bred up there from early youth, he was now Norman in speech, Norman in habits and sympathies, and Norman in the whole temper of his mind.

Once, therefore, he was settled on the throne of England, he surrounded himself with Norman friends, giving them high offices in court and country. Norman priests were among his leading favourites, one being made Archbishop of Canterbury, another Bishop of London; and the influence of these and other clerics had a great hold over his superstitious mind. Religion was a downright craze with Edward, and, though his exaggerated piety won him the title of Confessor in his life-time and of saint after his death, it played also a large and fatal part in binding him more closely to the very country which his people had most to fear. For it was now in that quarter rather than in any other that England's chief danger lay. The Norman dukedom was indeed no power to scoff at. Though at first a mere settlement of Danish

pirates, its strength had steadily grown. The Northmen settlers had become the Norman people—people great in the arts of peace as well as the art of war. Living side by side with France, they had soon lost something of their northern roughness, adopting the French language, French institutions, French architecture, and French ways of life. From being vassals to the French king, they had risen to the position of an independent state; but they were now bent on more than this. William, their reigning duke, whose conquests of neighbouring territory in France had made him already the foremost figure of his time, was a man of vast ambitions; and the prize which he most coveted was England. By fair means or by foul he meant that country to be his; and in the pro-Norman Edward he found, as it were, a tool made ready to his hand. His schemes looked far ahead: England with Edward on the throne was fast being Normanised by peaceful penetration. The ground being thus prepared, the next step was easy. Edward must be got to nominate him as his heir: the English King would not live for ever; and, when he died, William, as heir by promise, had only to claim his crown. So the Duke could easily afford to wait: there was no merit in winning England by the sword, if England could be won without it. The signs were favourable; and the Norman Conquest might well have been accomplished without either battle or bloodshed—but for a single hitch. William had reckoned only with the English King, not with the people whom he ruled; and presently there was disclosed the awkward fact that, though Edward wore the crown, he could not pass it on to whom he would. Truth to tell, the King was far from being master in his own dominions; and England, as William was to learn, had not one but many masters.

The situation, none too simple in itself, can perhaps best be understood by considering who these masters were and how they came to be.

Feudal Tenure.—In the everyday life of the ordinary Englishman, were he farmer or peasant, smith, carpenter, or wheelwright, it was not the power of the Crown which bulked most large. There was somebody whose strong arm he feared and respected far more than a king he never saw, and whose single word was weightier with him than any royal degree. This, to be brief, was the big man of the village, shire, or district: landowner or squire as we moderns should call him—Ealdorman or Thegn in Anglo-Saxon speech. The local power of such men was very great, and what really mattered to the little men of the countryside was how the big man treated them: was he easy-going and generous, then they prospered and were happy; was he stern and exacting, they were miserable and groaned. In short, he was their king in miniature, their master, protector, captain, and magistrate rolled into one.

How so much power came to be gathered into one man's hands is a somewhat lengthy story. It all began in the far-away days when the Anglo-Saxons settled down upon their conquered territory. When at that time the King parcelled out the land among the different families,

instead of giving it to them for nothing, he made a sort of bargain with the people. By this bargain he undertook on his part to do the fighting for them, if they would provide on their part for the support and upkeep of his court and warrior-band. Their support was to be given in various ways. First, by contributions made to the King's table, eggs at Easter, geese at Michaelmas, pork, cheese, poultry, or a cask of ale, each in its season. Secondly, by work to be done on the royal estate (for the King reserved to himself many acres out of the village plots). The amount and character of this work might vary: some giving a day or two weekly all the year round, others only at the grain-harvest; but all, may be, lending a hand for the King at sheep-washing time. Third and lastly, whenever the local court of justice met, and fines were levied for acts of robbery or violence, these fines, when paid, were sent to the royal exchequer. So, in one way or another the King's needs were well supplied and he lived in comfortable independence, as a king should do.

By and by, however, the King's realm increased: distances were great and roads bad; it was no easy matter for the King to keep an eye on all his villages. Officials called sheriffs were appointed to act as his deputies, whether by superintending at the local court or by gathering the annual contributions, which now, indeed, were regarded as the King's lawful and permanent "rents." But even officials were not always to be trusted, and the King had work enough to control them all. So he hit upon a better plan and decided to appoint a representative upon the spot. From among his warrior thegns he selected some faithful veteran whose services he was anxious to reward and, summoning this man to him, spoke much as follows: "Go you to such and such a village and, in a manner of speaking, be lord over it in my place. My estate therein (since I have others enough) I make into your hands. The 'rents' or contributions of the villagers shall, instead of mine, be yours. The work which has been done for me shall be done for you. The fines too, since you shall preside at the local court, shall be your perquisite.¹ All this I freely offer you—only"—it was not like the King to forget his own side to a bargain—"for all this you must do something in return. It shall be your duty, whenever war breaks out, to present yourself at whatever place I name, suitably equipped and bringing six stout fellows, well accoutred, at your heels. On this condition, and on this condition only, will I make over the village into your hands; and to this condition you must plight me your troth." So the bargain was struck and the oath taken, and the old warrior became the King's sworn liegeman. As for the villagers, they got a new master—a less pleasant master, as it seemed to them, because a nearer and more exacting one.

As years went on, moreover, the lot of the villagers grew anything but lighter. The new lord added little by little to his power; so did

¹ The collection of royal taxation, the "Danegeld," as it continued to be called, was placed by Cnut in the hands of the Lord of the Manor.

his son and his son's son after him. It is the old story. Then, as always, the rich man had the whip hand of the poor man; and in one way or another the lord would find occasion to draw the rein tighter. There came, it may be, lean years, or a party of Danish plunderers to sack the village, and the annual crop failing or being destroyed, grain was scarce among the villagers. My lord, having grain (or money at least) to spare, perceived his chance and made the villagers pay dear for his assistance. From one he got a pledge to pay in future an extra bushel or an extra pig above his customary rent; from another the promise to work one day extra weekly upon the manor farm; a third, even more desperate with hunger than the rest, bartered away his very land, and a few extra acres were thus added to my lord's domain. So, in this way or in that, the cord would be drawn a little tighter and a little tighter, until many of the villagers were hardly better than my lord's bondslaves. Half their time was his to be employed at his discretion: even liberty of movement had been lost, and without the lord's leave they might not quit the parish or seek another master. Bound to him for life, they were in truth his men, or (as the phrase ran) his "villeins," men of his "villa" or estate. Some who had had the misfortune to lose all their lands were almost as much his property as a horse or an ox in his stalls. And even for the free tenants, working for nobody but themselves and paying for their land a yearly rent, there was none the less a duty of service to my lord. They were in his debt for many things—for protection against the violence of strangers, for justice secured them in the local court, for a place behind his palisade in time of war—for all this some service in return was clearly due. So from the first it was understood that in emergencies they should answer his call to arm and fight under his standard—or at the very least pay a substitute to fight. And, just as he himself had taken an oath of service to the King, so the lord required a similar oath of them. They were sworn to be his servants and supporters "for life, limb, and earthly regard"; they knelt before him, placed their hands in his hands, received his kiss of approbation, and thenceforth they were his liegemen, even as he, in his turn, was liegeman to the King.

Thus by slow, strong growth a custom was developed what we call the Feudal System.¹ Every man had his place in it, each owing allegiance to some one above him. Step by step, from top to bottom. the men of all classes were ranged in a sort of pedigree of service. At the head was the King, father and lord over all. Under him, and rendering homage to him were the great earls, lords over many shires, ruling whole quarters of England. Under them again came the lesser lords, governors of single shires, or merely of towns or villages. To

¹ System is a misleading word, as a matter of fact, for the terms of feudal service grew up very much at haphazard. The terms of service differed from village to village and from shire to shire. They were kept by local custom, not by written agreement. In the Danish north, the development of Feudalism was especially slow to mature, as the Normans found out later.

these in their turn the lesser folk were subservient and did homage, some as free tenants, farmers or peasants, some as villeins owing him regular work, still possessing land, others mere slaves, having lost their land and being no longer free. Thus each lord had under him a group of men all of whom acknowledged him as head, many of whom worked for him, and of whom some at least fought for him. In his own sphere, each lord was king in miniature, keeping mimic court in his manor hall, maintaining his tiny retinue of servants, huntsmen, artisans and men-at-arms, exacting rents and services from his vassals, settling their quarrels in the local court, and in general controlling and ordering their lives. Now it was a most natural thing, and a thing which nearly always happened, that, when the true King was weak or indolent, the kings in miniature grew strong, making light of their duty to the crown and gathering to themselves more power. This was precisely what occurred when Edward the Confessor, weak king if ever there was one, ascended the throne. Edward was, in short, less his vassals' master than they his; and when he and Duke William conspired, as we have seen, to deliver England into Norman hands, it was these so-called subjects of his—and in particular the great earls—who stood between the shameful scheme and its execution. For they were Englishmen to the core, and had little intention of parting with their native liberties without a struggle.

The House of Godwin.—Now one man there was, as it so happened, infinitely more powerful than the rest. Godwin was his name and he was Earl of Wessex. His influence, however, did not stop short there. In addition to his own province of the south, he practically controlled the eastern counties and the southwest midlands also, having obtained these earldoms for his two sons, Harold and Sweyn. Only in Mercia and Northumbria he had no footing: their earls held jealously aloof. Wessex, East Anglia, and the whole country between the Severn and the Thames were not a bad beginning for a single family; but Godwin went still further and procured for his daughter a royal husband. He married her to the King. The man who thus, besides being at the head of half England, was father-in-law to the reigning monarch, was clearly a power in the land—and a power with which its enemies, too, had to reckon. Godwin was not the man to wink at what was going on between Normandy and London,¹ and his full influence was thrown into the scale against William's machinations. Thus a scarcely veiled struggle began between the English Earl and the Norman duke, a struggle which a trivial incident brought presently to a crisis. Some Norman knights, returning to the Continent by way of Dover, forced themselves on the unwilling townsfolk with a demand for board and lodging. Resistance was offered, and in the ensuing brawl seven of the unwelcome visitors were killed. The King promptly ordered Godwin to punish the town of Dover; and Godwin—secretly delighted over the whole affair—re-

¹ Under Edward, London now for the first time began to supplant Winchester, the old Wessex centre, as the capital of all England.

fused. Edward could be obstinate when he chose and called Godwin to account. The country was on the brink of civil war and the situation was saved only by the flight of Godwin and his sons out of the country (A.D. 1051).

But Edward's victory was brief. The English sympathy was with the great earl; nor was this sympathy lessened when William presently came over in person to visit Edward and extract a definite promise of the crown. Feeling rose high for Godwin, and next year saw the exiled family's return, welcomed and supported by the men of the south. Their position was now stronger than ever, and, though Godwin died, Harold succeeded to his father's place and to more than his father's power. Himself now Earl of Wessex, Harold obtained East Anglia for his two brothers, Leofwine and Gurth. Northumbria (hitherto outside the family) he procured for a third brother, Tostig. Mercia alone of all England was hostile to Harold, and sulkily withheld support to the true English cause. For by now it was clear as day that Harold was the country's champion against the Norman peril. While his power stood firm, William's schemes had no prospect of success. This William himself saw. He had measured his antagonist and, well aware that only by force could England now be conquered, the Norman bode his chance.

CHAPTER VI

HASTINGS

When, upon the death of an English king, the Witan was called on to appoint a fit successor, the dead man's next-of-kin had as a rule the strongest claim; and as a rule (though not an invariable rule) he was accepted. Now the Confessor had no son: his next-of-kin was a great-nephew, Edgar, called the Atheling, a member of Edmund Ironside's exiled family. But Edgar was still a boy, and not, in such troubled times as these, a likely king. There was therefore room for other candidates; and, as such, William, though a Norman, meant to stand. He had the Confessor's own promise of the crown, and, seeing that he and Edward (through Edward's Norman mother) were first cousins, there was at least some show of right upon his side. The other candidate was Harold; but, though brother-in-law to the King and the foremost man in England, Harold carried none of the blood-royal in his veins and had therefore no legal claim upon the throne. Yet he, too, meant to stand.

Harold's Oath.—A chance occurrence—one of those odd accidents that from time to time divert the course of history—had served to upset the balance of these rival claims, making William's look much better, Harold's much worse. In 1061, Harold, sailing in the Channel, was carried by a westerly gale to the French coast. Recognised there by the fisherfolk, he was taken prisoner by one of William's vassals and handed into the custody of the Duke. William was not one to let such a chance

slip by, and the condition of release which he proposed was nothing less than Harold's promise to support his claim on England. It was taking a cruel advantage, but Harold had no choice. Before a great gathering of noble witnesses, he took the oath, his hand upon an altar. The oath taken, there was revealed hidden beneath the altar a sacred relic.¹ Harold had sworn upon the bones of Christian saints. He had been doubly tricked. To ourselves the incident seems almost trivial, an oath extracted by compulsion, scarcely binding, but to the men of that day an oath was an oath, whatever the circumstances might be. Oaths were the bond by which (as we have seen) feudal society was held together. Harold had done what was virtually an act of homage. He was now Duke William's "man." An oath, too, taken thus over a sacred relic was no ordinary pledge. It was a religious act, solemn as the sacrament itself; its violation meant not treachery alone, but a deep offence towards God. So seriously was the pledge taken that the Pope himself backed it, sending to Rouen a banner blessed by his own hands. Thus doubly fortified with Harold's oath and the Confessor's promise, William might well feel confident, and when the time was ripe he counted to appear in England, not as an enemy usurper, but as claiming what was his by right. Two facts only stood in his way: his rival was an Englishman, and his rival was on the spot.

Harold played his cards well. On 5th Jnuary, 1066, he saw Edward on his death-bed, by him was entrusted with the care of the realm, and next day was crowned. The Witan accepted him; he had outplayed the Duke. Nevertheless, it would be idle to suppose that the mass of Englishmen, dull, unlettered peasants as they were, were enthusiasts for the new King's cause. A few months later, when Harold himself was dead and William crowned, they accepted the change without much protest or commotion. Their small minds indeed could scarcely travel beyond the end of their own village green; and in this, as in other matters, the big men led them by the nose. That the Witan had taken Harold was enough; and Harold's call to arms, when it should come, would be obeyed. If kings must fight, the people had at least learnt to suffer silently. Yet throughout these months of waiting, there was a sense as of coming disaster in the air, and a huge comet appearing in the night skies at the end of spring terrified men's minds.

All that spring and summer William was gathering his host, and on 28th September he landed at Pevensey beach in Sussex. But Harold, though he had long awaited William, was not there. The landing of another enemy had called him north.

This blow in the back came from his own brother, Tostig, the Northumbrian earl. Exiled by his subjects for misgovernment, Tostig had stuck at nothing for the recovery of his power, and had appealed for assistance to the Norwegian king, Hardrada. This act of treachery

¹ The evidence for the "sacred relic" is not too good. Some modern historians even doubt whether Harold took the oath under compulsion. It is quite possible that at this date he did not realise the danger of William's rivalry.

Tostig had committed believing that Harold was against him; but it was treachery none the less. For Hardrada, tempted by the apparent weakness of her newly crowned King, was determined like William to win England for himself, and he put in with a fleet of 300 galleys at the mouth of Humber.

Harold in the North.—Rightly or wrongly, Harold conceived the situation as a race against time. Things were indeed critical. Just a week before William landed, the defence of the north had broken down. The two brother earls, Edwin of Mercia and Morcar, Tostig's successor in Northumbria, had met and fought Hardrada. They had been beaten, and already Harold was marching north. Every day was vital. Strike he must; for, whatever terms might be possible with Tostig, there could be none with the Norwegian—saving Harold's grim offer of a tomb: "seven feet of English ground; or as much more as he is taller than other men." And the blow must at all costs be parried quickly before the other blow in the south should fall. Harold met Hardrada at Stamford Bridge, seven miles east of York, and he won a crushing and decisive victory. Tostig and his ally were left dead on the field; and only a remnant, the crews of four and twenty galleys, found their way home to Norway.

The battle was over and Harold was sitting in York, celebrating his victory at a feast, when the news of William's landing came. This was on a Monday. By the Friday evening (or Saturday at latest) Harold was in London. The distance from York to London is 200 miles: he had ridden it in four days. Even the foot army, weary with its long northward march and a hard-fought battle, followed him in nine. Such marching seems incredible. England had never seen its like, and has seen no better since. Yet five days was all that Harold gave himself in London. The men were coming in from the country-side, but he allowed no time for the Northumbrian and Mercian levies to get down. It may be that, since Edwin and Morcar were no great friends of his, they never would have come at all. In any case, Harold, still thinking time was everything, marched with the men he had, the levies of the southern shires and perhaps the eastern too. He was on the move all Thursday, and by Friday night he had reached the field of Senlac—the most brilliant feat of all; for from London to Senlac it is sixty miles. What private reasons Harold had for such haste, it is impossible to tell; perhaps he even doubted the loyalty of the absent earls. But, as a point of pure generalship, such haste seems scarcely wise. William had been on the coast a fortnight. He was there still. The plain fact was that he could not safely leave it. Dependence on his overseas supplies tied him to his ships, and a march on London or the Thames valley would have been hazardous in the extreme. It suited his book far better to draw Harold out against him, and to this end he harried and plundered Sussex with systematic violence. None the less it was a false step on Harold's part to be thus drawn; and, even when he reached the neighbourhood of William's army, he had not the strength to strike.

PLATE II



HAROLD ON THE THRONE WITH THE ARCHBISHOP BESIDE HIM

Bayeux Tapestry



NORMAN KNIGHTS ATTACKING THE FYRD AT SENLAC

Bayeux Tapestry

His own men were outworn by 500 miles of marching; in quality and equipment they were no match for the Normans; even in numbers they were inferior, for, though Harold was some five and twenty thousand strong, William could certainly count more. So Harold (wise in this, at least) stood on his defence.

The position on which his choice fell was good: the English army lay astride the London road, a forest at its back and to the front a clear slope falling gently to a marshy bottom. We have it from Wace, a chronicler writing ninety years after the event, that Harold strengthened his line yet further with an earthwork topped by a strong wattled fence. The building of this barricade, though other and earlier writers give it no mention, is possible enough; it was an old device, employed by the Danes in Alfred's time and likely now to prove a useful barrier to the rush of William's horse. Against the English thus posted, and on the very morrow of their arrival, the Normans moved out from their quarters on the coast. From Hastings to Senlac is seven miles; and they started at daybreak on Saturday, 14th October, 1066.

What followed it is worth while to tell in detail, not only because the battle itself was to decide the whole future of England, but because, for the good understanding of an age in which fighting was a great part of life and in which the men who counted for most were the fighters, it is well for us to know what the manner of their fighting was.

The Two Armies.—Between the two armies that were to meet this day there was, as has been said, a wide and striking difference. They differed in their personnel, in their equipment, in the whole method upon which they fought. English soldiership rested on the old tradition of the Danish wars: it was of the past. Not so the Normans: they stood in the very van of military science, able to draw for the arming and disposition of their troops on a rich experience of Continental warfare; and it was their tactics which were to be the accepted tactics of the coming age. Hastings, in a word, was a testing issue between the old system and the new, between a system which relied on infantry and a system which relied on horse.

Harold's army fought entirely upon foot: the bulk of it was inferior stuff, ill disciplined, ill equipped. The shire levies, taken from the plough and led by their feudal lords, the local thegns, were neither armed nor trained upon a settled scheme. Some came with spear and sword, a few with bows, many with nothing but clubbed sticks, stones fitted with a handle and flung at distant range, even with rude implements borrowed from the farm—hoes, and forks and mattocks. None, unless it were the thegns, wore body armour; a metal cap and a kite-shaped leathern shield were their sole weapons of defence. Such was the Fyrd, nine-tenths perhaps of the host that fought at Senlac. It is astonishing that they fought so well. Yet, even as it was, their stand would have been impossible without the stiffening of Harold's other arm. This was the famous House Carles, a picked body-guard, two or three thousand strong, which, since Cnut had set the fashion, had

been maintained by every king succeeding him on a permanent war-footing. Few even in the Norman host were better armed than were the Carles. They carried mail and on their heads close-fitting steel caps; they too, fought with sword or javelin when the press was close. But, when there was room to swing it, their true weapon was the axe, a thing of havoc and terror, shearing metal and mail like tow, and capable (as Harold showed at Senlac) of felling both horse and rider at a single stroke. It was in truth the axe-work of the House Carles that held the enemy at bay through the morning and afternoon of that long Saturday.

The Norman host was differently composed. It was no national levy which followed William, but the feudal contingents of volunteers from

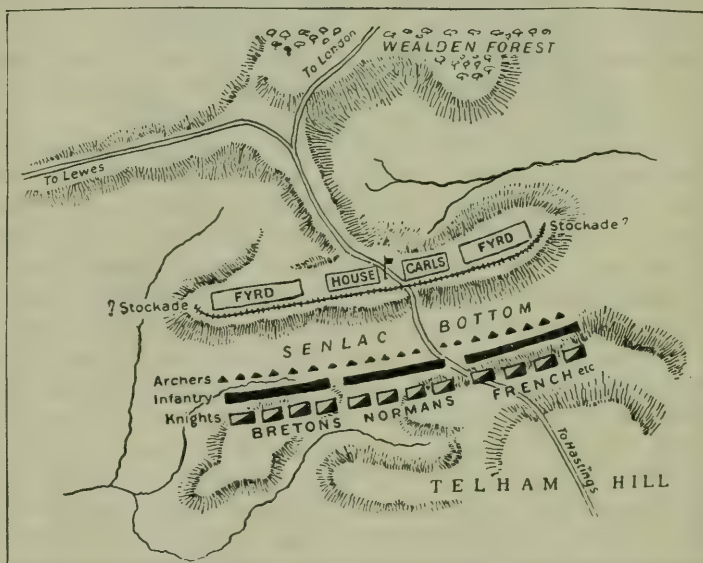


FIG. 5. BATTLE OF SENLAC, 14TH OCT., 1066.

among the Norman nobility. Many great princes (though some, indeed, held back) had come to share the Duke's adventure, and had brought their own personal retainers with them. There were Eustace of Boulogne, Count Alan of Brittany, William Fitz Osborne, Neal of St. Saviour, and many other resounding names, destined in some cases to play no trifling part in the ruling of conquered England. The material of the Norman host was thus drawn from very various quarters; but the different arms were accurately divided. They were three: archers, heavy infantry, and knights on horse-back. Of the archers and infantry little need be said, their business being simply to prepare the way for the delivery of the main blow—the charge of knights. These knights not merely formed a large proportion of the entire host; they were the very core of William's offensive, and Europe had no better riders. On

the scenes of the Bayeux tapestry (woven to commemorate the victory they won) the massed figures of these men stand out conspicuous. They rode chargers of heavy but powerful build, like cart-horses; they moved well together; and their equipment was complete: a conical steel helmet fitted with a jutting bar to guard the nose; a suit of mail, formed of metal rings or discs stitched on a leather shirt; a kite-shaped shield; and a lance for thrust or throw. That the charge of such a force was this day broken not once but many times is a proof, not merely of English toughness, but of Harold's generalship as well. For the man who faced him was himself a tried commander. William understood the use of troops; he had used them well and often in his French campaigns, and his skill was acknowledged throughout all Western Europe. Yet seldom, if ever, had it met with such a test as now was coming.

Norman Attack.—The Norman host had no sight of their opponents, nor, indeed—except through scouts—any knowledge of the field to be disputed, until, after two hours or so of marching, they gained the top of Telham hill, and from there could see the slopes of Senlac, a mile away across the valley. The knights, who, to avoid fatigue, had thus far ridden unaccoutred, now took their mail suits from the bearers, and a pause was made for preparation. It is said that William in his haste drew on his mail back foremost, and that, seeing his superstitious friends alarmed by the mistake, he passed it off quietly with a joke declaring that in like fashion a duke's suit would presently be turned into a king's. Nor was William without good ground for confidence, seeing what men he led; yet, even so, the price of victory was probably beyond his highest reckoning. The task before him was no easy one. The enemy (let us recall) was posted well up out of the valley, covering the slopes of the opposing hill. The Fyrd held the two wings: in the centre, grouped around the King's flag of the "Fighting Man" and its fellow, the red "Wessex Dragon," there stood the Carles. Below them on the slopes, and almost masking their foremost ranks from sight, ran a low but substantial palisade. To carry such a position, uphill, chiefly by charge of horse, and through a direct assault frontally delivered (for the simple strategy of the day aspired to little else) could hardly be other than a deadly business; yet to such an action the Norman with good hopes now commanded his men out. It was about nine o'clock in the morning.

William had planned to deliver the attack in three successive waves: archers first, then infantry, and last the knights. In that order then the line went forward. The archers skirmished up the hill-side, playing their arrows on the thick ranks behind the palisade. Their volleys (since bowmen were few among the English) must have gone practically unanswered. Yet so little was the English line shaken that, when the infantry in turn came on, they made next to no impression. The front was nowhere breached when the cavalry took the hill. The various contingents of the knights were marshalled in advance under their several leaders: William with his Normans in the centre (where the enemy

was strongest), his allies on the wings. But at the charge itself the ranks closed in, forming to the English eye almost one unbroken line. Crossing the level the riders must have sunk deep and floundered as hunters will in a sodden field in autumn; but the ranks were well kept, and a solitary knight alone, pushing his horse ahead, outdistanced his companions. This was a minstrel named Taillefer, and, as he rode, he broke into a song. It was the "Song of Roland," a famous ballad of the days of Charlemagne's chivalry; and, as the English caught the notes, they saw the singer play with his sword, fling it spinning in the air, and catch it again like a juggler in his hand. The song was soon cut short, for Taillefer was felled, and a moment after the charge went home. The shock was cruel, but the English ranks stood it well. And presently, the French knights upon the left recoiling, the excited Fyrd poured out in hot pursuit. It was an ill-judged act—proof, if any were needed, of the indiscipline of the Fyrd, and an act, as shall be seen hereafter, most fatal to the English cause. Out in the open the Fyrd were no match for Norman knights, and, severely handled for their rashness, they got back as best they could. Meanwhile, however, William, who had drawn off his cavalry, returned anew. This time he pushed the attack both hard and long, and there was desperate fighting on both sides, the Normans urging their horses to the palisade and driving their lances through, the Saxons dealing back with long sweeping blows of the axe. The whole valley must have echoed with the crash of steel on steel, and rising above it voices, two tongues in a strange confusion, the long rolling "Ha Rou" of the Normans, and the sharp English rally, "Out! Out!" and "Holy Cross." But such work could not last for ever. The defenders were hard beset, and here and there perhaps a breach was made. But the attackers too (and their horses, which were armourless, still more) had been suffering severely. At length the Normans flagged, broke off the battle, and drew away into the valley.

It was now mid-afternoon. The crisis of the battle had arrived, and William's situation looked anything but well. The flower of his cavalry was badly mauled; only four hours, or, at most, five remained to him of daylight, and he was as far off victory as ever.

A weaker man might have faltered and that day gone down upon a very different ending; but at this testing moment, when such another, fearful of further sacrifice, would have counted the battle lost, the Duke's genius stood revealed. Although throughout the day he had shared the charges with the rest, had three horses killed under him, and was at one moment felled, so that he needed to unmask his face for the reassurance of his followers, yet William had none the less kept a firm grip on the details of the day's battle. And now two separate resources, both suggested in part by his own observation of the day's engagement, and each in its way disastrous to different portions of the English host, were summoned into play. William's quick mind had noted and remembered the indiscretion already committed by the Saxon Fyrd. They had

followed out rashly once; they should do it again. Orders were issued, and, next time the Norman troops advanced, the attack was not pressed home. After a brief encounter they recoiled and scattered in apparent flight. It was the work of a moment: the Fyrd came pelting downhill after them, and then, as the Normans faced about and cut in on their unguarded flanks, found themselves in a trap. This time there was small chance to rally; very few got back to the shelter of the line; the most part either were killed or fled. The ruse had succeeded, and, whatever remnant may even yet have rallied to the King, the Fyrd as a whole might henceforth be counted out.

There remained the House Carles, still holding on staunchly and with a resistance not lightly to be broken. Against them William now played his second card. He told his archers to elevate their aim and direct their shafts so that they might fall steeply on the enemy ranks. The Carles had stood much hammering; but this fresh ordeal was almost beyond endurance. The volleys descending from the sky distracted their attention, pierced them in unexpected places, caused them to raise their shields when these were needed to the front, and finally stung them to break from an unbearable inaction into bold but futile sallies. The Norman knights burst in where the archers had prepared the way; and soon only a central group, a forlorn hope of indomitable warriors, stood guarding the double banner and their fighting King. Harold and what few survivors remained to him out of the slaughter held firm to the bitter end; but at length he too went down transfixed (as the tapestry at Bayeux shows him) with an arrow through the eye. The remnant, now leaderless, began to waver. The Normans broke in, hacked Harold's body where it lay, and cut down the standard poles. As the sun was setting, the rout went through the Wealden forest behind Senlac hill. Some of the Normans, indeed, pressing the pursuit too hotly in the failing light, stumbled on broken ground in a ravine and were cut up; but the English army never rallied, either that day or any after. The national resistance, such as it was, was broken, and the Conqueror had England at his feet. It still remained for him to receive the unwilling homage of his new subjects: he had still to crush some isolated efforts at revolt. But, when Harold fell dead at Senlac, none remained to dispute his title to the throne.

If William had a conscience, it was easily quieted, and the shallow superstition of the day had ready salves for any such qualms as his. During the day of Senlac (so the story runs) he had worn slung round his neck the sacred relic once used for Harold's oath; and on the battle site itself he had vowed to raise (and did raise) a great monastic church. And when, on the Christmas of that year, he took the Confessor's crown in the Confessor's own Abbey of Westminster, and though the service itself was actually interrupted by an alarm of treachery, he felt little doubt, though his new subjects were restive, that he would make good the great wrong he had done.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONQUEROR

Wessex and London were but the first fruits of his victory; yet William made little haste to gather the full harvest. There now remained no national centre of resistance; and the submission of the rest was a matter of time alone. So William waited, as the master waits for a disobedient cur to come to heel, knowing that it will come.

England was indeed cowed. All that year she made no move; nor, until William's back was turned and business in Normandy had called him overseas, did opposition venture to raise a timid head. Even so there was no unity of purpose. The people did not feel themselves one nation, nor did any great leader arise to inspire such feeling. So risings were local, and were doomed as such to failure. Gathering at Exeter, the thegns of the southwest made preparations for defence. Harold's mother was with them; and in a rash moment they declared their independence. Then the master's whip cracked. In 1068 William descended upon Exeter, and laid it under siege. The feeble folk gave in. In the Midlands, where Edwin and Morcar, absent from Senlac, attempted to retrieve what there was lost, it was the same story. At the first news of William's approach their armies melted away, and the two earls tamely submitting, were attached to William's court. For once, however, William was too trustful; for, a year or two later, they both got away, Edwin to fall in some petty skirmish, Morcar to join a last desperate rally in the East Anglian fens. At Ely a small band of patriots had collected under Hereward the Wake (A.D. 1071), and there, among the bogs and marshes, they were able to defy the Normans, who did not know the secret of the fenland tracks. Timber was brought and a solid causeway built; but Hereward's men fired the reeds and burnt it. Only when at last the Cathedral monks turned traitor did the island fortress fall. Morcar was caught and his followers punished by hideous mutilation. Hereward himself escaped; yet to support an outlawed man was more than any of the English dared; instead, they assisted the foreigner to hunt him down. England was now learning to recognise the master's voice.

English Rebellions.—The toughest resistance came where it might have been least expected. Northern England, which had fallen to the Danes in Alfred's day, was still full of Danish blood, and its people were thus kinsmen to the Normans, who sprang from the same Scandinavian stock. Yet what William encountered beyond Humber was not friendly welcome, but savage independence and (worse still) alliance with the Danish king. In 1069 a fleet arrived from Denmark and all Northumbria rose. They swept on York, burnt down the city, carried the castle and slaughtered all the Normans in it. Chronicles tell how

Waltheof, last of the great English earls "stood at the wicket hewing their heads off one by one," as the garrison came out. William could strike hard when it was needed, and he chose to strike hard now. He pardoned Waltheof, it is true, but he made of the northern rebels an awful example of his vengeance. From Ouse to Tyne he undertook deliberately to blot out man and all his works. Villages were fired wholesale, their inhabitants either massacred or starved. Churches were left in ruins, farms in ashes. Not even the fields were spared. Later in William's reign the Domesday survey tells the tale of what he did. Entry after entry in village after village bears the same word, "waste." The whole country was a desert, and its recovery was so slow that the better part of five centuries elapsed before proper cultivation was restored. Meanwhile the lesson had not been lost on England. She saw now, if she did not see before, that her new master was not one to trifle with. There were no more revolts.

Saxon and Norman Characters.—It is a pitiful sight to watch a people, great and vigorous in its day, bowing thus meekly to the conquest of a foreign prince. The spirit of the Danish north serves only as a foil to make the southerners' collapse seem more contemptible. Truth to tell, the Saxon had long since lost his grit. Though warlike and adventurous when first he came over to England, a settled life had spoilt him. His interests became rooted in his farm, and, even amid the perils of the Danish wars, the duties of national defence began to be forgotten. It became too much a habit to leave the fighting to the king and his special warrior class, and after Hastings, where these perished almost to a man, the common folk were helpless. The day of the Saxons was over; they were already a people in decay, slow of speech, indolent in habit, dull of wits, living in mean ramshackle hovels, wearing primitive, untidy clothes, ready to sell their liberty for bread or to buy off an enemy with gold, and so besotted with ignorance and vice that "they would eat" (says the chronicler) "till they were surfeited and drink till they were sick." For such a people slavery was hardly an unnatural fate, and, if masters they were to have, then the Normans were the men.

Of the vigour and vivacity of this very different race it is scarcely possible to say enough. The Norman was a portent in Europe. Here was a tiny people springing at one bound from obscurity to greatness; in a brief hundred years transforming England, conquering and governing Sicily and Naples, leading Christendom to the Crusade against the Turk. And, wherever he went, the Norman left his mark in laws, in organisation, in buildings. If you would know a nation's temper, look to what it builds. In the colossal close-knit masonry of Rome's aqueducts and bridges, you may read the practical unbending will of that great people. And, seeing the majesty of a Norman minster—the walls that often measure six, eight, or ten feet through, the round carved arch-heads rising tier on tier from their squat sturdy pillars, the tower, massive as a fortress, which the whole edifice carries and supports—

seeing all this, you may attempt to guess what was the energy and ardour of the men who filled England from end to end with buildings such as these. In the fifty years that followed the Conquest, more than half of the great cathedrals took their earliest shape. There is scarcely a parish church (above all in central and southern England) which does not still possess a Norman arch or two to show that here also their masons were at work. And, besides the churches, castles rose, at first of timber, but very soon converted into stone. Much of this building, it is true, was done by the forced labour of Englishmen. But that was the Norman way. These men possessed the habit of command. They walked the earth like lords and looked on a subject people as their natural servants. And they were hard task-masters.

The Norman Baron.—To such men—a mere handful, two or three thousand at the most—England at the Conquest was delivered over. From the outset it was William's policy to treat all English soil as forfeit to himself, thus dispossessing at one stroke all the native English thegns. A few, perhaps a fifth, were pardoned (because they had not fought at Senlac or for some such reason) and received their acres back. But the great bulk of English land changed hands during these years. The old Anglo-Saxon names are heard no more: the day of Gurths and Godwins, Elfgars and Leofries is over; FitzStephens and de Mandevilles, Bellêmes and Taillebois reign in their stead. For it was also part of William's policy to divide the spoils among his followers. Indeed, he had no choice. Those who had joined his expedition had stipulated in advance for their reward, and to keep his pact William was forced to grant them the confiscated lands. So England was parcelled out among the barons: to this one a group of villages; to that one half a shire; to a few (though very few) great earldoms in the Saxon style. It was easily done: a title was lost, a title won; and so the great change arrived. But for the small men of England, peasants, farmers, craftsmen, and the rest, this change was the beginning of different and less happy times. An evil day it must have been and long remembered in the village, when the old easy-going Saxon thegn came back no more from Senlac, but in his place a foreigner entered upon possession of the hall. The new master was not what the old had been: he had not been brought up among the villagers; he did not even understand their speech; he cared little or nothing for their welfare, but considered mainly what profit he could draw from them.

Doubtless there were exceptions, good barons as well as bad; but, taking him altogether, the Norman was beyond dispute a greedy fellow. "All must needs get and get," says the Saxon poet, "and none asks how his gains are gotten." Too often, we may guess, the Norman showed himself a petty tyrant; his high spirit could ill brook a settled uneventful life, and, when fighting was over and even hunting palled, he would work off his sullen temper on the helpless folk beneath him. Their plight was not to be envied. They were made to work harder on his fields than they had ever worked before. Many of them lost

what little land they had and from being villeins sank into the condition of mere serfs. Resistance was impossible: the Norman had a short way with those who crossed his will. And besides, with every year that passed, he was increasing the strength of his position. He would build himself a castle, if nobody was strong enough to stop him. He would gather round himself a formidable retinue of men-at-arms,¹ the chief business of whose life was to fight their lord's battles—on the king's side if their lord was loyal, against the king if it fell otherwise. These were no rabble of raw peasants like the Saxon Fyrd. They were soldiers trained to carry a lance, wear mail, and ride a horse. Better men did not charge the hill at Senlac, and, whether settled as tenants on their lord's estate or kept as regular retainers of his household, they were always ready to answer his call to arms. And he, on his part, with such men to back him, grew doubly proud of his little kingdom. His ambitions rose; he measured his power with jealous eye against the power of his brother barons; he resented any attempt at interference from without. In fine, the Norman was what we call "a man upon the make," masterful to his inferiors, carrying his head high among his equals, and ready to challenge even the authority of the crown itself.

And for the man who wore the crown and counted these men his subjects, what awkward obstreperous subjects were they likely to prove. They had crossed the channel, let us remember, not as William's servants, but rather as his companions-in-arms. At home in Normandy they had enjoyed great independence: they had never acknowledged the Duke's authority beyond what suited their own taste.² And here in England they saw little necessity to change their habits, because the Duke now called himself a King. In short, they had no intention of being driven on too tight a rein, and they were not an easy team for any man to handle. Luckily, however, William was what some of his successors (most unluckily) were not, a man who knew his own mind and who meant to have his own way. He is an immense figure, the commanding personality of perhaps five centuries, the one man out of a million for performing such a task. From the outset he stood up to the barons fearlessly; he checked and limited them at every turn, and by sheer force of character he made his will prevail.

William's methods were personal and autocratic, rather than constitutional or legal. He issued no great code of laws, such as did the second Henry: he held no theory of the royal prerogative like Charles the First. He simply ruled as a strong man, whose slightest word must be obeyed. But, though his hold over the barons rested not so much on novel or striking legislation as on thorough and determined government from day to day and year by year, yet among his various policies and measures, some seem to stand out as of capital importance. They are these:

¹ One hundred men-at-arms would, in point of fact, have been a very large following for those days.

² William's authority over his feudal tenants was, however, a good deal stronger than was the case in other parts of France.

(i) First, in the matter of granting land to individuals, William took one very obvious precaution. No baron who received considerable estates, received them in one piece; on the contrary, they were widely scattered, one patch maybe in Norfolk, another patch in Kent, and a third far away in the west. Thus the estates which were granted to Robert of Mortain, amounting in all to 793 manors, were divided among twenty different counties. This scattering of estates made it extremely difficult for any baron to combine his forces or to acquire such widespread influence as the Godwin family acquired in the Confessor's reign. Indeed, William had no wish to see the dangerous power of the old Saxon earldoms perpetuated under his own régime. He made some exceptions, it is true, but they were rare, and for each exception, a good reason can be found. Along the borderland of Wales, for instance, he allowed several properties of unusual size. The Earls of Shropshire, Hereford, and Chester, were useful sentries against the warlike Welsh. But they were a danger to William too, and we shall hear of one at least again. On the Scottish border also he left a similar earldom with similar intent; but this for greater safety he made over to the Bishop of Durham, as being less likely than a layman to abuse the trust. His own personal requirements, on the other hand, William did not stint. He kept huge estates under his control, and, with some 1400 royal manors up and down the country, he was by far the largest landowner and therefore by far the richest man in England. This was of special importance in days when there was as yet no regular system of taxation and a king had to draw upon his own resources for the upkeep of his power.

(ii) As with lands, so with castles, William was careful to see that all the strongest places were his own. At London he began the building of the Tower, the main structure of which was a keep or donjon, quadrangular in shape, and with walls of stone just five yards thick at the base. Such solidity, however, was uncommon. The score or so of castles which he built in other places were completed in as many months, and their keeps cannot originally have been much more than timber palisades. Nevertheless, they were a great source of strength to William; all the more so since no other person was allowed a castle at all without his leave. Such leave was seldom given; and it was not until the reign of weaker monarchs, like King Stephen, that a large crop of baronial castles rose.¹

(iii) These were strong checks upon the barons' power; yet there was another still stronger and more subtle. This was the Feudal Oath. Not in England alone, but on the Continent as well, all men regarded the feudal tie as a most binding force. Vassalage was the outstanding feature of the age. For little by little it had come to be the practice that no man should be landowner in his own right: land was always held from somebody else. Thus the baron to whom the king granted an estate was said to hold it from the king; that is, the land was his, but

¹ c/p Plate III.



NORMAN KEEP, HEDINGHAM



EDWARDIAN CASTLE, BODIAM

only on condition of rendering some service in return. The man again to whom the baron granted some portion of his land was said to hold it from the baron; that is, the land was his, but, once more, only on condition of rendering some service to the baron. The form of service might vary infinitely: there was no settled system. The baron served the king in many ways, but chiefly by providing an armed contingent in times of war. The free tenant served the baron by paying rent in kind or by donning mail and carrying a spear when so required; the villein, by working on his lord's estate. But the root and centre of the matter was the feudal oath. Each man, in return for the land he held, did homage and swore obedience to the man from whom he held it.

New Feudal Oath.—Now, at the time of his conquest, William had taken a far-reaching decision. As we have seen, he declared all English land to be forfeit to himself. So, when he came presently to parcel out the land among his Norman friends, he required of them the vas-



FIG. 6.—NORMAN CASTLE, SHOWING INNER WARD WITH MOAT DRAWBRIDGE, GATE-TOWER AND KEEP, AND OUTER WARD WITH TIMBER PALISADE.

sal's oath. The barons (or tenants-in-chief, as they were called) were sworn to be "his men"; it was their bounden duty to obey and support the king. But now a difficulty arose. The men to whom the barons granted land (the mesne or middle tenants, as these were called) were sworn the "baron's men." They were, therefore, bound in duty to obey and support the baron. What then would happen if king and baron should fall out? Should the mesne-tenants support the baron or the king? It was in truth an awkward dilemma: it resembles the situation of the prefects in a school, should the head-master order them one way and their immediate chief, the house-master, then order them another. Yet it was precisely the situation with which the Conqueror was faced. He met it characteristically by asserting his own personal authority.¹ In the year 1086, when invasion was threatening him from

¹ In this he had behind him the tradition of French Feudalism on which Norman Feudalism was modelled. Thereby the baron held his land from Duke or King on a much more rigid understanding of dependence and of corresponding military obligation.

Denmark, he saw his chance, and summoned at Salisbury a meeting of all landowners, both great and small. How many actually came we cannot tell: the tenants-in-chief would certainly be there, but it is unlikely that the mesne-tenants could have been present in large numbers. In any case, whether all were there or no, the upshot of the meeting was the same. William established once and for all the principle that in his own house the king is the real master. Every rood of English land was by right of conquest his; every grant of land thus came in the last resort from him; and every man who held any land in England owed therefore obedience to himself. No man, were he ten times a baron's vassal, was in future to support the baron in preference to the king. The oath, which was taken at Salisbury, put an end to the lesser men's dilemma. It made every Englishman a "King's man" first, "a baron's man" but second. Englishmen did not always remember this, nor always act upon this principle. But there it stood: if head-master and house-master should disagree, the prefect's duty cannot stand in doubt; there is no king but Caesar.

The "Domesday Book."—William was nothing if not thorough. Seeing the country his by double right of conquest and the feudal oath, he further decided to catalogue its contents. In the year previous to the Salisbury moot, he had sent out surveyors into every corner of the land. They set about their task in a systematic fashion: every town and village was visited, and they went armed with a whole catechism of questions to be put to every tenant, small or great. "What is the name of your manor? Who held it under King Edward? Who holds it now? How many hides¹ does it contain? How many ploughs are there on the demesne? How many belong to the tenants? How many villeins, cottiers, slaves, free men, socmen are there? How much woodland? How much meadow? How many pastures? How many mills? How many fish-ponds? etc., etc. And whether more can be got than has been got?" From the answers given to those questions, the great catalogue was compiled. Its details were extraordinarily minute: one might almost say that every pig in England had been noted down. The natives, humorously pretending that not the Last Judgment itself could be more thorough, dubbed it the "Domesday Book." Nor was the object of all this information mere idle curiosity on William's part. It was likely to be useful to him in many ways; useful when he gathered in the Danegeld—a tax which he still levied, though its original purpose had long vanished; useful again in checking the details of the Salisbury moot; above all, it was likely to prove an invaluable guide to the King's officers, the Sheriffs, when these went on their rounds collecting the royal rents, supervising the business of the local courts, or spying on ambitious barons who were suspected of tyranny to their tenants or treason to the King. In short, what with these agents of the Crown to watch them, Domesday to lay bare their weakness and their strength,

¹ A "hide" was used in various senses, originally for that amount of land which would support a family—later for a unit relative to the taxation of land.

feudal oath to deter them from rash disobedience, and, above and behind all these, the stern unsleeping eye of the Conqueror himself, quick to note the slightest misdemeanour and prompt to visit it with dign retribution or disgrace, there can be little doubt that the Norman barons were held in a tight grip. For all their turbulence and head-strong character, these men had met their match. Yet, even so, William's own life was not sufficiently prolonged to make the position of his successor quite secure. Salisbury was barely over and Domesday was still unfinished when the Conqueror died, in 1087, upon Norman soil.

Barons' Rebellion.—As reigns go, his was a quiet reign. The trouble with the Saxons came to an end when Ely fell. Open defiance from his Norman subjects was confined (in England at least) to one revolt. This isolated effort fell on this wise. Roger, Earl of Hereford, and Ralph, Earl of Norfolk, two of the biggest landowners in England, bore a private grudge against William, because he had forbidden a marriage match between their families. In 1075 William happened (as was not infrequent) to be away in Normandy. During his absence, the two earls brought off the forbidden marriage, and after the ceremony proceeded to hatch a plot for the overthrow of the King. They further enlisted the support of Waltheof, the Englishman, who had been pardoned for his share in the northern rising and reinstated in his earldom. Waltheof was induced to join the plot by a promise of the crown; but the conspirators' confidence proved a little premature. The secret leaked out; prompt measures were taken, and the rising turned out a miserable fiasco. The truth was that Waltheof had given the whole thing away. The memory of his feudal oath troubled him. A feudal oath was a very solemn matter: it was often taken (like Harold's oath in Normandy) over some sacred relic. Stricken in conscience, Waltheof confessed to the Archbishop and received his absolution. The Archbishop played him false. Ralph escaped to Normandy. Roger was let off with imprisonment for life. But the English earl was condemned to death and lost his head on the hill by Winchester. William still found it politic to be merciful to Normans; but he was never at much pains to conciliate the conquered race.

It would be idle to pretend that the English folk were happy under William. He was a hard task-master: he caused great misery by turning large tracts of cultivated land, reckoned at nearly a third of the whole acreage of the realm, into hunting forests for himself. His code of punishments was barbarously cruel, for he preferred mutilation to the death sentence not from any feelings of humanity, but because he considered life without limbs or eyes more terrible than death. Yet, take him for all in all, the man was just. If he ruled the Saxons sternly, he ruled the Normans sternly too. Over in Normandy, where he had come into his inheritance at the age of eight, he had seen what anarchy meant; and he was determined to check it at all costs in his new realm. These were rough and violent times, and, though no doubt the conquered people suffered, they would have suffered more under

a weaker king. Even Englishmen themselves acknowledged that. Hear what one of them—the writer of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle—has got to say. He does not flatter: his is a verdict we can trust. “King William was a very wise man and very mighty; gentle to the good men who loved God, and beyond measure severe to the men who withstood his will. . . . He had earls in bonds, who had done against his pleasure; bishops he put away from their bishoprics, and abbots from their abbeys, and thegns he put in prison, and at last he spared not his own brother Odo. . . . Amongst other things is not to be forgotten the good peace that he made in this land, so that a man who was himself aught might fare through his realm with his bosom full of gold. And no man durst slay another, how much evil soever he had done to the other. . . . Truly in his time men had much hardship and full many troubles. He caused castles to be built and poor men to be sore oppressed. . . . His mighty men were grieved and the poor men murmured, but he was so hard that he cared not for the hatred of them all; and they must follow the king’s will withal, if they would live or hold lands or chattels, or even have his peace. Ah, that any man should be so haughty and lift himself up and count himself above all men. May God Almighty shew his soul loving-kindness and forgive him his sins.” There is no tribute like the tribute of an enemy. William was a great man as few are great. A great wrong he had done to England, but he had done her great service too; for, before he died, he had made it possible beyond all expectation for Englishmen and Normans to become one people.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONQUEROR’S SONS AND THE POPE OF ROME

The Conqueror, dying, left behind him two kingdoms and three sons—a problem of practical arithmetic not too easy of solution. And such in fact it proved. The three brothers were Robert, William, and Henry; and of these Robert, the eldest, was a fool. Already, as nominal Duke of Normandy during the Conqueror’s own life, he had turned out a dismal failure. Not only could he keep no order among the baronage, but he had actually levied war against his father and come within an ace of killing him in battle. This act of folly was to cost him dear. The Duchy, it is true, he was allowed to keep; but England, too good to be wasted upon such a man, the Conqueror bequeathed to his second and favourite son, William the Red. Henry, the youngest and far the most able of the three, was put off with a legacy of £5000.

Robert of Normandy.—Here was plenty of material for a good family quarrel; so quarrel the three brothers did unceasingly, and, whatever happened, the eldest always lost. Robert had no luck, neither did he deserve it. Though a brave fighter, he was quite incapable of steady purpose, and so thriftless that once, as we are told, he even

parted with his wardrobe and was forced to keep his bed for lack of clothes to wear. So it was that Robert, being seldom out of debt, was always ready to barter his rights and properties away for gold. He sold the Côtentin, the long peninsula by Cherbourg, to the ambitious Henry. Then, when Rufus came over and beat him out of half Normandy, he swallowed the humiliation and helped his greedy brother to get the Côtentin too. When, after an interval, Rufus came back for more, Robert grew sick of domestic fighting and of Normandy, pawned the whole province for a loan of £6666, and departed for the First Crusade.

At Rufus' death he was to turn up once again, but his old ill-luck still dogged him, and he arrived just a month too late. Hearing the news that Henry had usurped the English Crown, Robert planned invasion, crossed the Channel, and got half way to London. But even now the offer of a pension sent him home well satisfied. The pension he was not to enjoy for long. Normandy, which was now his again, was in a terrible state; and it was clear to Henry's mind that the farce of Robert's misgovernment must cease. At the battle of Tenchebrai, in mid Normandy, the elder brother was taken prisoner and brought back to England, where he was kept in close custody for life. Tenchebrai, however, meant something more than the eclipse of Robert. By the English victory, the verdict of Hastings was, so to speak, reversed, and Normandy in her turn became the subject state. It was a blessing in disguise. The barons of the Duchy, spoilt by long years of anarchy and licence, were utterly out of hand, and it was high time that they should taste the firm rule of the English king.

William Rufus.—For, though neither of the Conqueror's successors was his equal, both Rufus and Henry had something of their father's energy and wits. All the fiercest and least pleasant side of the Conqueror's character was reproduced and exaggerated in his second son. Rufus was a loud-voiced, boastful bully, gross in his habits, frequently given to outbursts of wild temper, blatantly contemptuous of decency, honour, and even of Christianity itself. Nor was the man good to look upon. His corpulence, no doubt, was in part hereditary, for the Conqueror too was fat, and we are told how at his funeral the coffin lid could not be made to shut, so much did the old king's body overlap. But Rufus' features were his own, and the sneering mouth, the sullen eyes, and the blotched, fiery face (whence came his name), were the unmistakable tokens of an ugly character and an evil life. It is but one further proof how complete had been the Conqueror's work, and how sound the model of government he left behind, that such a man was at all able to follow in his steps.

Yet, with all his faults, Rufus was no weakling, and in politics he was even not without some instinct for doing the right thing. For the better rounding off of his dominion, he pushed the Scots back from Cumberland and fixed the boundary at Solway Firth. He likewise led an expedition into Wales, which left, however, less mark on the wild

mountainceers than did the steady pressure kept up by the great Marcher earls. As for the baronage, Rufus was not the man to let them have their way, and he early showed himself their master. In the first year of his reign, Odo, Prince Bishop of Bayeux, half-brother to the Conqueror and Earl of Kent, organised a great revolt. His pretext was to claim the English crown for Norman Robert, and the barons, prompt as ever in the support of any but the king they had, rallied to Odo's side. Simultaneously, revolt broke out in Sussex, East Anglia, and the west. Rufus' crown was in danger, and he took a step at once boldly original and unexpectedly successful. He appealed to the English peasantry for aid against the Norman barons. Promises were not difficult to make, and Rufus made them in plenty—better justice, lighter taxes, and an end of the cruel forest laws. These promises had the desired effect. The Fyrd came out enthusiastically for Rufus. The rebels were soon beleaguered in their strongholds and forced to yield. Odo and his accomplices were driven into exile. The peasants returned home again, and Rufus, as the peasants might have guessed, forgot the promises which he had made. He had never meant to keep them. It was no policy of his to promote his subjects' welfare nor even, except at a crisis, to value their good will. His father's yoke had been heavy: Rufus added to that yoke. The forest laws above mentioned were a case in point. Under the Conqueror, as we have seen, large tracts of land had been withdrawn from cultivation and made a hunting ground for the monarch and his court. The laws made for the protection of these so-called "forests" were harsh in the extreme. To cut down timber, to disturb the game, or even to drive them off the standing crops was forbidden, under penalty of fine or mutilation. Rufus went one better, and made it death to kill a deer. It was a just revenge of fate that the king who thus sacrificed the lives of others to his sport, should have lost his own thereby. He was hunting in the New Forest near Winchester, when an arrow carelessly aimed by Tyrell, a member of his suite, struck him down. Tyrell fled. The body, packed into a charcoal-burner's cart, was carried to Winchester, where it was buried, without rites of Church, under the cathedral tower. Not long afterwards, the tower fell in, and men said that divine displeasure had pursued the ungodly king even into his grave.

Henry I and the Barons.—Like many younger sons whose fortunes must depend upon their wits, Henry was far cleverer than either the feckless Robert or the boorish, illiterate Rufus. The title of Beau-clerc was not given him for nothing; he was a man of education, who had seen something of the world and could appreciate the conversation of learned men and monks. The years he had spent waiting for his chance to come had not been thrown away, and when it came, he showed himself not a strong man only, but a wise man too. Having seized the English kingdom without much legal right (since Robert, his elder brother, was alive), he saw clearly the need of popular support, and what Rufus had done from necessity, Henry attempted of deliberate

purpose. In more ways than one, he set out to conciliate the English folk and pose as a genuinely English king. His marriage was a good beginning, for he took as his queen, Matilda, a princess of Edward the Confessor's line. At his accession, too, he made splendid promises of great reforms, and, though like most royal promises, they were much too splendid to be kept, yet during his long reign Henry did much to set his realm in order and strengthen the authority of law. His methods were severe; theft, hitherto more mildly treated, was made by him a capital offence, and as a start we hear of four and forty robbers hanged at one assize. Nor, for that matter, was much respect of persons shown; rich and poor were alike to suffer the penalty of their misdeeds, and even the lord who killed one of his villeins was not to go scot-free.

Henry's chief problem rose, however, from the very wide divergence which he found between existing laws. These had grown up at haphazard, part coming from the Anglo-Saxons, part from the Danes, so that the law which held in one shire was often quite different from the law which held over the border, and the customs of East Anglia bore little relation to the customs of the West. Henry made a brave attempt to standardise them all. A careful record was kept of all verdicts given in the King's central court. This was intended to serve as a model code for all the local courts, and travelling justices were sent out on circuit to enforce the code. Progress was naturally slow, but little by little England, through such reforms, was ceasing to be a mere bundle of disunited folks, each independent of its neighbour, each following laws and customs of its own, each using a different coinage, and each talking a dialect which was all but a separate speech. Little by little she was becoming a single and more compact state, a state which could bind the interests of even Englishmen and Normans into one. For already the barons themselves were beginning to lose something of their foreign character. They now were the sons of those who had first crossed the water, and this new generation had been bred in England; they had grown familiar with English habits and the English tongue, and they had learned to look with a more friendly eye upon the English peasants that they ruled. Some, it is true, were still cruel and bloody tyrants. Such, for example, was the notorious Earl of Shrewsbury, Robert of Bellême, a man who could take a devilish delight in watching the torture of poor wretches who had been so foolish as to cross his will. Even under Henry this man did much as he listed. He built for himself great castles on the Welsh border and, when the chance offered, he took arms against the King. The English Fyrd came out for Henry, as it had done for Rufus, and Bellême was driven an exile into Normandy. Yet even there he continued his treasonous intrigues, until, after Tenchebrai, Henry was able to lay him by the heels. It would have been well indeed for England had Bellême been the only baron of his kind, but there were plenty of others ready to imitate his ways, if once the opportunity was given them. How much the country owed to the sturdy if brutal government of the Conqueror's two sons, was

manifest only when a weaker monarch succeeded to the throne. The misrule of Stephen makes even Rufus' reign look bright.

Yet, strange to say, the chief quarrel of these two reigns was not with the baronage at all. The subject who gave most trouble to Rufus and Henry was neither an Odo nor a Bellême, but a mild, saintly, stiff-necked old Archbishop of Canterbury, and the weapons with which the Archbishop fought were in a sense more dangerous to the crown than the whole armoury of the strongest Marcher earl. For just now the Church was beginning to enter into competition with the King; she was no longer his ally but his rival; her ministers' allegiance was slipping from him: it was claimed for another lord, the Pope. This was an awkward matter for the King; awkward that a bishop owning whole counties should refuse him feudal homage; still more awkward that the defaulter should support his action by arguments from Holy Writ. For in this quarrel the King could not safely count upon the loyal support of his other subjects. When barons rebelled, the people's duty was plainly to the crown; but, when bishop and king fell out, the people stood in doubt. Who were they that they should take sides against the appointed ministers of God?

Mediæval Religion.—Of all the institutions of the Middle Ages, none commanded a more wide or popular devotion than the Church. All men alike acknowledged her authority; they leant on her with the helpless simplicity of children who never question a mother's word or act. To lose the Church's favour was for them intolerable, and excommunication from her rites the most terrible punishment they knew. Religion, in short, was ingrained into their lives: its forms and ordinances were a part of their daily habits, and to cross themselves or rattle off a Pater Noster was for them as natural as for us to brush our teeth or read the morning paper. Not that the men of those times were any better behaved than we are to-day; the contrary is probably more true, but they were infinitely more concerned about the salvation of their souls. The very criminal had pious moments when he suffered agonies of spiritual remorse, and even kings and princes, leading the most scandalous of lives, would seldom omit a regular attendance at the mass. In part, all this was due to a very simple, yet an earnest faith, but in part also it was due to the superstitious temper of those times.

Men believed in all sorts of queer occurrences which would be called mere fairy tales to-day: apparitions of angels, saints, and devils were by no means rare; evildoers fell suddenly dead by direct manifestation of divine displeasure; sick folk were miraculously healed by contact with a dead saint's bones, and even living kings were credited with power to cure an epileptic by their touch. And along with superstition went its companion, ignorance. Ignorance put the people completely at the mercy of the more educated priests, and the priests themselves were not slow to find methods of compelling the obedience of their flock. One obvious and powerful instrument was the threat of eternal punishment, and there was little inclination on the clergy's part to palliate the

horrors of Hell fire. In many village churches there stood over the chancel arch a frescoed representation of the Judgment Day, in which horned, cloven-footed demons were to be seen pitchforking the naked figures of damned souls into the flaming jaws of the Bottomless Pit. The moral of the warning was not lost. Unquiet consciences are made more pliable by fear, and, though there were hardened sinners and sceptics too, no doubt, the majority preferred to satisfy their qualms by truckling to the priest. What the priest told them, they believed; whatever he commanded, they trembled and obeyed. They had indeed no other guide. Very few were capable of reading for themselves, and, if they were, the Bible and Church Services were written and recited in unintelligible Latin. So men brought their sins, as a matter of course, to the Confessional, and whatever amends the priest required, flogging or fast or penance, pilgrimage to some shrine or gifts of land or money to the Church, we may be sure the priest's bidding was speedily obeyed. The trustful laity regarded him as the inspired mouthpiece of the Deity, the steward of mysteries incomprehensible to themselves. And all this the priest himself believed no less. He saw himself a man set peculiarly apart, devoted to the service of Almighty God. The claims of the world he abjured or disregarded. He did not marry;¹ and he was exempt from civil law. If his duties were not easy, neither were his privileges few, and the priest made the most of them.

Power of the Clergy.—But great as was the priest's authority, the bishop's was still greater. His influence was not spiritual alone; he was a power in the land. For bishops did not confine themselves to sacred things; they took a leading part in politics and war. They vied in influence with the barons, building castles, leading their contingents into battle, wearing mailed armour underneath their robes; some held high offices of state. Such was Ranulf Flambard, for example: he was Bishop of Durham, then Archbishop of York, and he was also Rufus' right-hand man. He rose to be Chancellor, the most powerful position in the land. In short, an ecclesiastical career offered great opportunities for the ambitious, and election to a see brought with it abundance of worldly wealth and much temporal power, as well as spiritual. Even the humble monk, elevated on a sudden direct from his cloister cell to a bishop's throne, found himself turned into a veritable prince, beset by flatterers, canvassed by courtiers, pursued by jealousy and intrigue, living in a palace which also did duty for a fortress, keeping a retinue of servitors and men-at-arms that any baron might have envied, owning vast estates which even a king (as we shall see) might covet. To ourselves, no doubt, this pomp and circumstance seems strangely out of keeping with the Christian creed; the churchmen of that age thought otherwise. Nor was it from pure worldliness that they sought such power (for, though some were worldly, many bishops

¹ In theory a priest remained single all his life, but in practice this rule was not too strictly kept, and, though Popes and bishops were continually trying to enforce it, a great many English priests had wives.

led holy, self-sacrificing lives); rather, they valued the power for the uses to which it could be put. For they meant (or said they meant) to use it in Christ's service for the furtherance of His Church. If stubborn men would not hear the truth for the truth's own sake, other means to conversion must be found, and, if spiritual arguments did not impress them, it was necessary to fall back upon arguments which would. Worldly power had assuredly its use.

Such then was the theory and policy of the mediæval Church. Its chief exponent—the man who might almost be said to have invented it—was the Pope Hildebrand, a contemporary of the Conqueror, and more commonly known as Gregory the Seventh. Throughout his years of office Gregory laboured hard and skilfully to improve and strengthen the position of the Papacy. He left it a power in Europe second to none. The pretensions of this great Churchman were novel and extreme. He claimed to dictate his will to all Christendom; he interfered between sovereigns and their subjects; kings and princes were expected to bow to his decision; to humble their greatness was his special delight. "Young lions and adders," he quoted proudly, "thou shalt trample under foot." It was a motto which Gregory's successors adopted and expanded.

For these great prelates stuck at nothing. Even the theory of feudal tenure was turned to the advantage of the Church. To them the king's supremacy was nothing. The Church was divine; God was her head, her lands and properties she held from God, and the homage of her ministers, if paid to man at all, could be paid only to God's vice-regent upon earth, the Pope. Now it was plain that bishops could not serve both Pope and king at the same time, and this claim was a distinct challenge to the feudal claim of kings; it threatened the very foundations of their power. Everywhere, as was natural, the Papal pretensions were bitterly resented, but by none more bitterly than by the English kings. That the Bishop of Rome had the right to order the affairs of the English Church, none of them ever doubted or denied till a much later date. But, while acknowledging him as their Father in Christ, they utterly refused to allow his temporal claims or to submit their own temporal authority to his.

One after another they stoutly resisted the Pope's attempt to interfere between their subjects and themselves. The quarrel dragged on through four centuries, the point at issue varied; it was one thing under Rufus, another under Henry II, and yet another under John; but no sooner was the quarrel settled in one shape than it broke out again in another, until at the Reformation England took her final stand and once for all rejected the supremacy of Rome.

Rufus, Henry and Anselm.—Gregory and the Conqueror died in the same year, and, strong ambitious men though both had been, they none the less remained on good terms to the end. But William's tact was sadly wanting in his son. Rufus was too quarrelsome and too greedy to keep the peace for long, and the quarrel, when it came, was the direct

outcome of his greed. The Church, as we have seen already, was rich in lands; vast estates had come to her from pious benefactors or conscience-stricken rogues, until one-fifth of the country was under her control. From such estates enormous rents were paid to abbots, bishops, and archbishops, and on these rents Rufus began to cast an avaricious eye. Presently a bishop died; a see fell vacant and, instead of appointing a successor, Rufus left it unfilled. Then, as there was nobody to take the rents, he took them for himself. Nothing could be more simple. The game was played with great success in numerous instances; finally, it was played with Canterbury itself. The Church, thus left without a head, protested; but protests were quite vain: "By the Holy Face of Lucca," Rufus swore, "none shall be Archbishop but myself." The see was still vacant when Rufus fell dangerously ill. Being a coward, as bullies mostly are, he made a death-bed repentance on the spot, and declared that he would fill the vacant see. The Archbishop of his choice was Anselm, as modest and saintly a man as ever stepped and Abbot of Bee in Normandy. Anselm, who happened to be near at hand, resisted the appointment violently. He was dragged struggling into the King's bed-chamber; his clenched hand was forced open by the forefinger and the pastoral staff thrust into it. A *Te Deum* was sung; the clergy rejoiced, and Rufus—recovered. "When the Devil was sick, the Devil a saint would be; when the Devil was well, the devil a saint was he." With convalescence the penitential mood departed. Anselm had got the staff of office, but Rufus had not the least intention he should get the lands. "By the Holy Face of Lucca," he swore again, "God shall get as little good from me as I have got from God."

It was now Anselm's turn to take the quarrel up, and he did not mean to let the King off lightly. Not only did he insist on the surrender of all his lands, but shortly afterwards he actually repudiated his feudal duty to the crown. Rufus was planning a campaign against his brother Robert and had asked the Archbishop, in common with his other vassals, for feudal aid. Anselm at first refused outright, then offered five hundred marks, and, when so insignificant a sum was scorned, distributed the money to the poor. Rufus did not trouble to conceal his anger. "Tell the Archbishop," he said, "that I hated him yesterday; I hate him more to-day, and to-morrow I shall hate him further still." But this was not all; Anselm had made a successful stand upon his temporal rights; he was now to put forward a religious claim. The special badge or emblem of the archbishopric was a vestment called the "pallium," a sort of single stole looped round the neck and hanging down the breast. Without the pallium, Anselm said he was no true archbishop, and he could receive it from none but the Pope; short of that the appointment could not stand. It is hardly surprising that Rufus was suspicious, or that he disputed Anselm's arguments. He had appointed the Archbishop; it was his royal privilege; there was no call whatever for dragging in the Pope. A council of bishops and barons was convened; and (as we might have guessed) the

barons supported Anselm, though the bishops, fearing the King, did not. Envoys were sent to Rome; but the Pope, as befitted Hildebrand's successor, took Anselm's side and Rufus was forced to yield. So Anselm got his pallium from Rome, and for a while things went quietly again. Nevertheless there could be no lasting peace between a king and prelate so utterly opposed, and, shortly before the Red King's death, the two fell out again. This time Anselm left the country, and went himself to Rome to seek advice. Once there he stayed.

When Henry took over the kingdom, Anselm had not returned. This was unfortunate, for, as we have seen, the young king felt uncertain of popular support and wished above all things to be legitimately crowned. He sent to Anselm, apologised for holding the coronation in his absence, and begged him to come back. Anselm came, but came fully primed with new and dangerous notions learnt in Rome. Shortly before his arrival at the Papal court a general council of the Church had met, and in the plainest language had declared that for any layman whatsoever to invest a bishop in his office was an illegal or, at the very least, an invalid act. This was old Hildebrand's doctrine with a vengeance, and Anselm's head was full of it. He refused point blank to do homage to the King; he announced that all Henry's ecclesiastical appointments were null and void. Much as Henry desired peace, this was more than he could stand. He said so plainly, and back went Anselm to the Continent again to take up his quarters at his old monastery of Bec. Nevertheless, the King kept his temper well, and continued to argue with the Pope, with such effect that at last an agreement was effected. By this agreement the rights of investiture were to be shared. From the Pope a bishop was to receive his staff and ring, symbols of his spiritual power. From the king he was to receive his lands and properties, performing homage for the same. It was, in short, a compromise of give and take. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." With Anselm's return, the controversy ended, and the King came into his full feudal rights once more. Yet the compromise was, in fact, no better than a truce, and it remained for Becket some fifty years later to revive in a different shape the quarrel which Henry's statesmanship had so successfully allayed.

Towards the end of his long reign, Henry reaped the benefit of the various triumphs he had won. Men looked up to him, praised him, called him the "Lion of Justice," there was none but respected his strong arm. Nevertheless, his last years were clouded by the knowledge that at his death he could leave the kingdom in no worthy hands. Of his two children, a daughter and a son, the son had been lost at sea. In 1120 the young man and his riotous companions had put out from Harfleur in a boat called the *White Ship* to cross the Channel. The pilot (nor was he the only guilty one) was drunk, and at midnight they ran upon a reef. The ship foundered with all hands, and only a Rouen butcher, escaping on some wreckage, survived to tell the tale.

For two days the courtiers dared not inform the King; then a page dressed in black was sent in to break the news. It was a shock to Henry, from which he never wholly recovered. Only his daughter, Matilda, now remained to him, and before his death he decided to commit the kingdom to her hands. The decision was not happy, for nobody in England wanted a queen of any sort, and Matilda least of all. Yet the results of the decision no one could have foreseen. The wreck of the *White Ship* was a tragic end to Henry's hopes: it was the beginning of worse than tragedy for England.

CHAPTER IX

FROM ANARCHY TO ORDER

Stephen or Matilda.—Upon one point at Henry's death the barons were quite clear. They would have none of his daughter, Matilda. They knew only too well what sort of sovereign they would find in this unpleasant dame, hard as her father Henry, grasping as her uncle Rufus, doubly ambitious in the interests of a baby son, who, come what might, she intended to be king, doubly uplifted by her marriage, first, to the German Emperor, and then quite recently to Geoffrey, Count of the great French province of Anjou. Masterful and meddlesome Matilda could not fail to be, especially with this foreign consort at her back; and the barons were sick to death of royal busybodies. All they asked was a sovereign who would leave them to themselves, and, as it so happened, Matilda's rival candidate suited their ideas exactly. Stephen de Blois, a son of the Conqueror's daughter, was as good-natured, generous, easy-going a gentleman as ever you might wish to meet; but search the whole world through, and you would scarcely find another gentleman so little fitted to be king. For that, however, the barons did not care a jot, nor for the fact that Stephen's support was already promised to Matilda. So, when Henry died, the promise was as soon forgotten, and Stephen, coming forward, was joyfully accepted.

Matilda, however, was not the woman to take this usurpation quietly, and she promptly appealed to the Pope to denounce the promise-breaker. But the Pope, as it so happened, approved of a weak king for the same reason as the barons did, and, instead of denouncing Stephen, commended him. Matilda's next hope was to foment rebellion, and there was little difficulty in that. Any baron worth his salt was always ready to rebel against anyone; and the most natural thing after setting a king up was to knock him down again. Nevertheless, for the first two years of Stephen's reign insurrection hung fire. Then Matilda won the ear of her half-brother, Robert, Earl of Gloucester. Robert was a great man, an illegitimate son of the late king and by far the most powerful baron in the west country. No sooner did he rebel than a host of lesser

lordlings began to raise their heads. In a moment all the west was up. Hereford, Dorchester, Exeter, Corfe, Ludlow, Shrewsbury, and a score of other castles were in rebel hands. East Anglia was little better. The only sound elements remaining were the Midlands and the valley of the Thames.

Stephen's Incompetence.—Before this storm, which either Rufus or Henry could have stemmed, Stephen was helpless. The very rudiments of discipline were unknown to him; he would have been a failure even as a company commander. Then, as always, there was a time for severe measures and a time for mercy, a time to strike and a time to hold the hand, but which was which Stephen, poor simple gentleman, could never tell. Thus, when barons built themselves castles, he looked the other way. When two bishops did it, he caused them to be clapped into a dungeon and "tortured with sharp fasting" and by so doing he lost the one ally which he might have kept, the Church. He even alienated his own brother, Henry de Blois, the Bishop of Winchester. Henry had all the strength of character which Stephen lacked, and, with an impudence which even the stubborn Anselm never could have rivalled, he summoned his brother, the King, to appear in the episcopal palace at Winchester, and there to explain his conduct before a court of clerics, and—Stephen went. It was just like him to be most weak when there was most need for strength: that was invariably his way. Before the Barons' revolt was fairly started, there occurred a serious invasion from the north. David, King of Scotland, broke over the border and got nearly to York before the brave old archbishop gathered an army to Northallerton and beat him in the so-called Battle of the Standard.

Now, instead of taking full advantage of this victory, Stephen showed a quite gratuitous indulgence towards the Scot, and ended by making a present of the whole county of Northumberland to David's son. Such weak generosity was a fatal policy above all with the barons, and Stephen's methods were simply an invitation to rebellion. When too much power had made the big men restless, Stephen gave them more to keep them quiet—with the natural and precisely opposite result. When they rose in arms against him, he had no settled strategy, but dashed about here, there, and everywhere, behaving, as somebody has remarked, like a maddened bull in the ring. Brave as a lion in battle, and possessing great physical strength, he could have outmatched any one of his opponents in single combat; but to beat them by generalship was utterly beyond him. He was too much of a gentleman to beat them by any other means. When Matilda first came over to England in 1140, he had her at one moment completely in his power. But Stephen "did not make war on ladies," and she was allowed to go at liberty and continue her intrigues. At last, after four years of aimless and inconclusive warfare, another powerful ally joined the rebels. Next to the Earl of Gloucester the most important baron of the west was the Earl of Chester (these Marcher earldoms left by the Conqueror were a fatal legacy to his successors); and, when this man added his forces to the rest,

it was too much for Stephen. He was caught at Lincoln by superior numbers. He fought (as the chronicler relates) "more bravely than the bravest, cutting down all within his reach till the sword broke in his hands. Thereupon a citizen put into his hand an old Danish axe. Though left alone, and with almost all his fellows scattered, no man dared to lay hands on him," but at last a great stone struck him from behind. He was overpowered and sent in safe custody to Bristol. Matilda's hour seemed to have arrived.

Matilda and Anarchy.—In taking this new mistress (the full title of queen was never given her) the English soon found how bad a bargain they had made. Matilda was, as we have said, an aggressively masculine character. Had she lived in the twentieth century, she would certainly have been a suffragette, and militant at that; but the men of her own time were little accustomed to the type, and it did not take Matilda long to lose what she had won. On the 2nd of June she took up her residence in London. Within a few days her high-handed behaviour had raised a storm of indignation. The bells rang, a mob of citizens gathered, and Matilda and her suite were forced to leave their dinner-table and escape as best they could. After some wandering, she took up her quarters at Winchester, the ancient royal capital. Here she fell out with the strong-minded bishop, Henry de Blois, fought him, and once again was compelled to make a rapid exit. This time she escaped, so the story goes, disguised as a corpse in a coffin. By this ruse she herself got away, but her brother and ally, the Earl of Gloucester, did not. He was caught by the King's partisans, and his release could only be procured by the release of Stephen. So the war began again, and dragged on wearily till Gloucester died and Matilda left the country. But England's agony was not yet ended. To the common folk it mattered little whether Stephen kept the crown or lost it, so long as the duties of the crown went unperformed. For, when the royal discipline grew lax, the barons acted like a set of obstreperous boys and bullied the smaller fry.

If the country's plight under the Conqueror was hard, it was tenfold harder now. Everywhere castles were hastily run up, a thousand or so, and no permission asked, mere stockades of timber, no doubt, rather than of stone, but formidable enough at that. From the security of these castle-keeps the barons watched like spiders for their prey, and within the castle dungeons they wreaked their will upon the hapless victims of their lust and cruelty. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in what is almost its last chapter, relates the hideous doings of these men: "They filled the land full of castles, and when the castles were made, they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those men whom they deemed to have any possessions, both by day and by night, husbandmen and women, and tortured them with unspeakable tortures. For never were martyrs tortured as they were. They hanged them up by the feet, and smoked them with foul smoke. They hanged them up by the thumbs or by the head and hung fires on their feet. They put

knotted cords about their heads, and twisted them so that it went to the brain. Some they put in a cruce-t-hus, that is a chest that was short, narrow and shallow, and put sharp stones therein and pressed the man therein, so that they brake all his limbs. In many castles there were neck-bands so that two or three men had enough to bear one. It was made thus, that is, fastened to a beam, and they put a sharp iron about the man's throat and his neck, so that he might in nowise sit or lie or sleep, but must bear all that iron. Many thousands they killed with hunger. They laid fines upon the towns, and when the wretched men had no more to pay, they robbed and burned the towns. Then was grain dear, and meat and cheese and butter, for there was none in the land. However a man tilled, the earth bare no grain, for the land was undone with such deeds, and they said openly that Christ and His saints slept." In truth, the plight of the oppressed and famished people could hardly have been worse. England's distress called aloud for the firm hand of a strong courageous man, and where could such a man be found?

Henry the Second.—Happily he was not far off. Matilda's infant son was now of age, and in 1153 a second Henry, grandson of the first, crossed over from France to try conclusions with his cousin. The campaign did not last long and ended in a bargain. Stephen thereby retained the crown, but during his lifetime Henry was to share the power, a king in all but name, and on his death he was to take the crown and reign as full king, as Matilda meant he should. Neither Henry nor England was kept waiting long. The very next year, 1154, saw Stephen's death. The darkest chapter in England's history ended, and a fresh chapter, bright as this was dark, began.

The task confronting Henry was tremendous. England, all to pieces as she was, might have seemed in herself a sufficient handful for one man; but England was not all. In one way or another it was Henry's fortune—or misfortune—to be master over nearly a third of France. All the countries of the western sea-board came to him: Normandy and Maine, as the hereditary appendage of the English crown; Anjou, just to the south of these, from his father Geoffrey, who was Anjou's Count. Southward yet his realm included the province of Gaseony and Aquitaine, for he took to wife its princess Eleanor, and the lands along with her. Thus from the Tweed to the English Channel, and from the English Channel to the Pyrenees, Henry II was rightful lord—and he was twenty-one. On no English king except the Conqueror was so heavy a burden laid; yet, with the same exception, no one was perhaps so well equipped to bear it. For, like the Conqueror himself, young Henry was a portent: "tawny-haired, round-headed and freckled, with large flashing grey eyes, thick-set and coarse of frame, of the bulldog breed; utterly indifferent to food and drink and to all the conventionalities of kingship; so restless and active that he seldom slept two nights running in one bed; a passionate sportsman, who never let sport interfere with business; knowing something about everything, and much of law, phi-

losophy, history, languages, and poetry; never ceasing to add to his stock of knowledge and experience, and never missing an opportunity to pick the brains of a learned man; a firm friend, but a good hater, proud and unforgiving, and given to such frightful fits of passion that

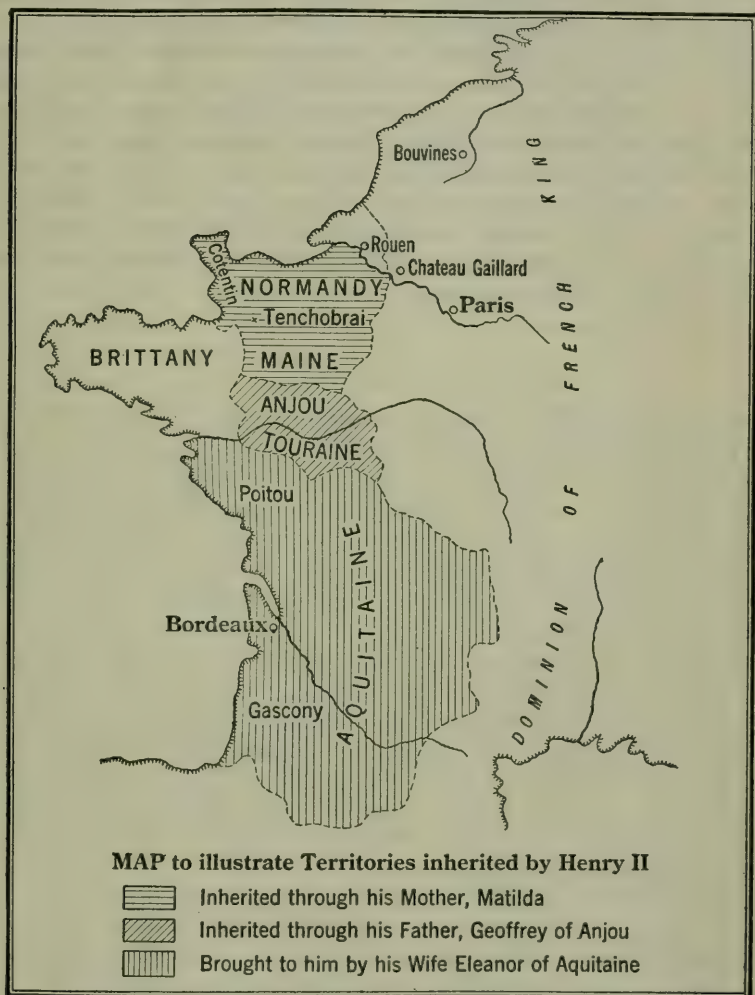


FIG. 7.

he would fling himself on the floor and gnaw the rushes which then did duty for a carpet. A man of this extraordinary character naturally perplexed the brave reticent Normans . . . and very annoying indeed it must have been to be the rebellious feudal baron of such a man, and to find that he whom you knew to be in Rouen four days ago suddenly appeared before your castle in Northants at 5 A.M., with an entire Eng-

lish army at his heels, long before you had been able to lay in your stock of lead for melting and your lean salt beef. The only thing to be done was to let down your drawbridge and ask him in to breakfast: perhaps his politic clemency was the hardest of all to bear. The existence of such a king made rebellion a more sacred duty for the barons then ever; but it made it infinitely more hopeless of success.”¹

Even if Henry did not equal the Conqueror in strength and firmness, yet in one sense he did better, making good where the Conqueror had failed. For nothing after all was done in William’s reign sufficient to prevent what happened during Stephen’s. William ruled well because he was William. Personal character was the secret of his success; but character is what no man can bequeath to his successor. Henry too had character; but he had something more. His was a mind which looked ahead, and he had the foresight to build up a system which might survive when he himself was gone.

II

Henry’s Legislation.—Henry’s reign, in short, was to be a landmark in England’s political development. Hitherto laws and customs had grown up at haphazard, each king adding a little here perhaps and a little there; but, for the most part, laws and customs depended on immemorial custom, handed down from generation to generation; and their actual administration was largely left to the individual governors of shires or counties, or to the barons who administered their own estates as they themselves thought best. There was no unity or consistency; you could never have written down the constitution as a whole. Now Henry did not add much which was positively new; and, even when he did make innovations, he would try to cloak their novelty by quoting precedents from former reigns. What he did do was first to get to know about these scattered laws and customs; then to take them, as far as possible, under his own control. In a word, he reduced them to a system, of which he himself was the supreme authority and head.

In all this he was much helped by his own unusual learning. Like all great law-givers, he drew for inspiration on a wider past and he looked back to the greatest source of law the world has ever seen—the tradition of Imperial Rome. The Romans first conceived of a great empire in which there should be one law for all, and in which all authority should centre upon a single and all-powerful person. By using the model of Roman law, Henry was able to give to English institutions just that unity and system which in their casual patch-work development had hitherto been lacking. The English State as he left it was no longer a vehicle which kept the road or was landed in the ditch according to the skill or incompetence of the driver on the box. It became a machine,

¹ From Mr. C. R. L. Fletcher’s *History of England*.

moving, if you will, with lurches, creaks, and even stoppages, but yet, for all that, a machine which worked and kept the rails.¹

Wherein then did this constitutional machinery consist? In every form of government there are two sides: first, there is the duty owed by the governed to the governor, and, second, the duty owed by the governor to them. In the Middle Ages, the first of these two duties centred almost wholly round the great royal business of conducting war. Every king (and Henry was no exception) felt bound to make frequent war upon his neighbours; and in this undertaking it was his subjects' duty to support him with money and with men. Money had hitherto been gathered by the old Danegeld tax; but it had been gathered very ineffectually, from landowners alone among the classes, in money of many different currencies, by sheriffs who usually kept back more than a little for themselves. Henry made a clean sweep of the old deceitful sheriffs and supervised their successors far more strictly. He established a single coinage for the whole realm; and (most important of all) he adopted a new system of taxation whereby every wealthy citizen, town-dweller, merchant, or whatever he might be, was bound to pay his share. This reform was doubly beneficial: now that taxation was to be conducted in a less haphazard fashion, every man understood more precisely for how much he was liable; and the royal income was thereby multiplied perhaps three-fold.² The result was that Henry was able to organise a much more efficient army than hitherto. Instead of relying wholly on the feudal contingents of the baronage, he could now hire soldiers who would be more directly under his own control, and (what is more) whom he could use, if need be, against rebellious barons. Besides this, however, Henry wished in case of emergencies to have a national army at his back; and here again he very justly insisted that all alike should bear their share. By his Assize of Arms in 1181 he made all freemen liable for service. In addition it became each man's duty to find himself in arms; and all were bound to appear at the King's summons suitably equipped, from the baron, with his mail suit and charger, down to the humble smith or miller with his pike and leather shirt. It was not perhaps in practice a very formidable militia, but the principle in itself was so sound that it seems strange how many Englishmen had till 1914 forgotten it.

Henry's Reform of Law.—But service commands service; and for

¹ We must not mistake the character of Henry's "Legislation." It was not effected by the passing of definite "Laws," as we know laws. What happened was rather this. The King issued an order to his officers and judges to act in such and such a way; and the observance of such orders came gradually to be the custom, and so, to all intents and purposes, the law. But it is important to realise that, in the Middle Ages, measures were nearly always taken to meet some special problem, not to assert a general principle. Cf. what is said about Magna Charta, pages 94 *sqq.*

² Henry's system of taxation did not take proper shape until nearly the last years of his reign. He instituted in 1187 a tax for the Crusade, known as the Saladin tithe, which was levied on all in proportion to their wealth, and not merely upon holders of land. Just assessment of this "tax on capital" was ensured by the use of juries who, in each district, computed the value of their neighbours' property.

all this the King, as we have said, owed in return some duty towards his subjects. To give them justice was the least that he could do, and in this matter of justice also Henry aimed at the same sound principle of equality for all. Obstacles indeed were neither few nor insignificant. The barons liked to be judges of the disputes and misdemeanours of their tenants; and they were not particularly impartial judges. Worse still, as we have seen in the first Henry's reign, the customs holding in the local courts varied not merely between different counties, but even between different villages and towns. The second Henry was even more determined than his grandfather to suppress these variations. There was to be one law for all, King's Law or Common Law, as it is called to this day. As a start he made the "King's Court," of which we spoke above, a much more regular and powerful instrument. A court of five justices sat in permanence, and on points of difficulty consulted with the King. The only trouble was that, as the King travelled, the King's Court must travel too: and one unlucky suitor is said to have pursued the court for five whole years together before he could catch it up! As under Henry I, the Common Law, of which the King's Court set the model, was carried outward into the country courts by Judges of Assize: but here a new idea, by far the most important of the King's reforms, was hit upon.

Whatever else Henry may have copied from his predecessors, Trial by Jury was in very deed an innovation. By the old-fashioned method of conducting trials, justice—or injustice—had been done, not by the plain intelligence of twelve good men and true, but by a more or less direct appeal to the Providence of God. This appeal took various forms, none of which could have been accepted in any but a grossly superstitious age. The most popular was the Ordeal. The accused man was forced to plunge his hand into boiling oil, and, if the skin failed to heal within a fortnight, God's judgment was held to be against him; he was condemned to death, fine or mutilation on the spot. As an alternative to boiling oil, he might walk blindfold between rows of red-hot ploughshares, hold a lump of molten metal in his naked hand, fight a duel with his accuser or with the official champion of the Crown. In each case, as before, the verdict was left to accident or (as they put it) to the Providence of God. Last, and most strange of all, was the verdict by Compurgation. If the evidence was inconclusive, the prisoner who could get twelve men to swear his innocence on oath was considered clear of crime; and here again we must remember the superstitious temper of the time, and the peculiar sanctity attached to oaths. All this nonsense had gone on for centuries, and even Henry himself did not stop it altogether. His new juries were not impartial outsiders, but rather neighbours of the accused, likely to possess knowledge of the facts; and they had the power merely to acquit the prisoner or commit him to trial; not to declare his guilt or pass his sentence. If committed, he appeared before a judge, who gave him the chance of undergoing the ordeal. The verdict was still left to accident—or God. Queer

times indeed; but this strange mixture of cruel injustice and superstitious faith was characteristic of the Middle Ages; and how deeply it was rooted in men's minds is shown by the practice of ducking "witches," which scarcely a hundred years ago was still in vogue. Nevertheless, Henry's new Jury system paved the way for better things, and, as the growing influence of the Church brought more enlightened notions into play, the ordeal finally dropped out.¹

Clerical Courts.—In these reforms, however, the ultimate test of Henry's real success was, as Henry himself knew well, the measure of authority he was able to exercise over the Church. It was useless clearly to establish the principle of "one law for all," if the clerics as a body remained outside the operation of the law. For the clerics or "clerks," as they were called, were a numerous and motley crew, standing much in need of legal discipline. Besides those properly invested with the full orders of the priesthood were many in minor orders, performing some humbler function in the Church—choirmen, sacristans, bishop's secretaries, or members of his suite. These minor orders, in fact, were very often taken for no other reason than that they opened the way to promotions and preferments inaccessible to laymen. Admission to such minor orders was not difficult. The test of learning was absurdly superficial; and to be considered a "clerk" it was often held sufficient to have been able to recite in the Latin tongue a single verse out of the Vulgate. The privileges, on the other hand, which these "clerks" enjoyed were solid and important. Not least of these was the very one of which Henry himself fell foul. By long established custom it was the Church's right to try all clerks, of whatever crime or felony accused, in her own courts and in her own way. Did a sacristan pick my lord's pocket, or an archdeacon poison a prince, the King's law was impotent to touch him. He went before the clerical courts, and, as may well be guessed, the clerical courts let the "clerk" down very lightly. A fine or a penance was considered ample punishment for the most serious crimes; and, though murders were not unfrequently committed by "clerks," the death sentence was unknown.

Quarrel with Becket.—Henry, who was determined that this farce should cease, decided to try conclusions with the Church; and, looking about him for an instrument, discovered (as he fancied) what he sought. His most trusted servant, close companion, and firm friend was the Chancellor, Thomas à Becket. What more suitable assistant for his schemes than such a man? Becket was accordingly persuaded to turn priest and to accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury. The change was easily made; but for once Henry's judgment was at fault. Becket was

¹ The Church played a great part in reforming these and other abuses. The Lateran Council of 1215 forbade the continuance of such evil practices as the ordeal, but, even so, its influence was slow to take effect. Indeed, it is curious how long these old-fashioned forms of justice lingered on. Never having been definitely repealed, they crop up in rare cases in quite recent times. Compurgation was actually used as late as 1824; and Trial by Battle was claimed, though not allowed, by a plaintiff in 1819.

indeed a loyal servant; whomsoever he served, he served with his whole heart; but he could not serve two masters, and, now that it was a choice between God and Mammon, Church and King, Becket chose the Church. To Henry's horror it was soon abundantly revealed that Becket took his new orders seriously. There were no half measures with Becket; whatever he did, he did thoroughly, and he now began to push the interests of the Church with the same whole-hearted energy as he had hitherto bestowed on the management of the royal estates. He outdid the veriest saint in the strictness of his life; took to fasting and scourging and suchlike humiliations of the flesh, as naturally as though he had never feasted upon sumptuous banquets, or lived with the pomp of a prince. He wore habitually (as the monks to their great contentment discovered at his death) a hair-shirt next his skin; and—a still more characteristic mark of mediæval piety—he seldom washed. The story goes that once, when a princess noticed something moving in his sleeve, he shook that something out, and lo—to the Archbishop's own surprise and to the young lady's joy—the moving bodies had turned miraculously to pearls! But, such legends apart, there could be no doubt whatever that Becket was a changed man—changed in all respects save one: he had not lost an atom of his obstinacy and pride.

As for the King's designs upon the Church and the clerical courts, it was now clear that Becket would be no friend to these; and, seeing what two powerful champions both Church and State possessed, it could not be long before the old quarrel which Anselm and Rufus had begun, and which Henry's grandfather had so skilfully allayed, should flare up again anew. Henry, having determined that the Church's exemption from common law must cease, made a direct attack on the power of the clerical courts. He had not indeed the courage to suggest their total abolition; he offered a compromise. When a clerk had been tried by a Church court and there found guilty, he was first to be degraded from his orders and then handed over as a layman for a second and decisive trial in the King's lay courts, and from these receive his sentence. To this effect Henry issued a definite decree in the so-called Constitutions of Clarendon (1164). Becket was furious; stood upon his rights; defied the King "to touch the Lord's anointed"; blustered, faltered, and finally, in a weak moment, gave his archiepiscopal assent. The moment after he repented bitterly of what he had done. He went back upon his word, and appealed to the Pope to absolve him from his promise—a service which the Holy Father was only too delighted to perform. It was now Henry's turn to be angry. At a Council held in Northampton there was a battle royal between the King and the Archbishop. Becket appealed against the King to Rome, a thing which, as was pointed out, another clause in the Constitutions of Clarendon had positively forbidden. The Archbishop's patience was at length exhausted; he stalked out of the hall threatening those who tried to bar his passage at the door, travelled in disguise down to the coast, crossed to the Continent, and appeared before the Pope. The Pope, as was

natural, gave Becket his comfort and support. The two laid their heads together, and as luck would have it Henry made a false step which delivered him into their hands. He had been anxious (it was no unusual precaution in these unsettled times) to have his son and heir safely crowned as his successor even while he himself was still alive. Tired of waiting for the Archbishop to return, Henry got the ceremony performed by other bishops against the Pope's wishes and without the Pope's leave. The Holy Father's wrath was terrible; excommunication was plainly hinted at, and Henry saw no other course than to give way. The hatchet was buried. Becket was permitted to return.

But one rash act begets another. The Archbishop came home in no repentant or conciliatory mood. The illegal coronation still rankled in his mind. The bishops who had been so unwise as to usurp his special privilege should feel his hand. He had not excommunicated them before; he would excommunicate them now. It was Christmastide, and Henry was keeping the festival in France when the fatal news arrived. "My subjects are sluggard men of no spirit," he exclaimed; "they let me be the laughing-stock of a low-born clerk." Four of his knights, without his knowledge, resolved to take him at his word. They crossed in secret to the Kentish coast and made their way on horse to Canterbury. Becket received them in his bed-chamber, sitting on his bed. The knights sat on the floor. The interview was heated, angry words were passed, and Becket refused to withdraw his ban upon the bishops: the knights retired; was it for consultation, or to arm? The terrified monks persuaded their master, not without difficulty, to take refuge in the Cathedral near at hand. The bell was tolling for vespers and it was dark. Had he wished, Becket might easily have hidden or escaped. But, whatever else he was, the Archbishop was no coward; some say that he even desired to die a martyr's death. He remained with one or two companions to confront his enemies who were already battering at the great West door. The knights' blood was up; and, when Becket (whose tongue was somewhat sharp for a would-be holy martyr) called one by an ugly name, a blow was aimed at his head. Edward Grim, his biographer, and now at this last crisis his sole companion, caught the blow upon his arm. Other blows followed, and Becket soon went down. One of the knights drove his sword-point into the dying man's skull and scattered the brains upon the floor.

No single act throughout the Middle Ages so startled Christendom with horror. Becket dead did Henry far more harm than Becket living. The king had no choice but to repudiate the crime: he did penance barefoot, fasting at the dead archbishop's tomb, and there he submitted to a scourging from the monks. And, worse humiliation still, he abandoned his attempt to overcome the pretensions of the Church. The Constitutions of Clarendon practically lapsed from the hour that Becket died. The clerical courts survived. Popular feeling allowed of no other course. Becket was universally hailed as a saint. His shrine at

Canterbury—a veritable treasure-house blazing with gold and precious stones—became the favourite object of pious pilgrimage. His death gave a halo of romance to a life of doubtful usefulness, and reinforced, as no other act of his had ever done, the influence and reputation of the Church. Had he been able to foresee the full outcome of his martyrdom, Becket would most undoubtedly have wished it.

Henry in Ireland and France.—It was fortunate perhaps for Henry—maybe it was even his deliberate policy—that he was soon able to forget his domestic troubles in the excitements and incidents of war. In the year of Becket's murder he had allowed the Earl of Pembroke, Strongbow by name, to lead a freebooting party against Ireland. Things had gone well at first; then Strongbow had found himself in difficulties, and at his appeal for help Henry had set to work to organise an expedition. For an English king at the head of an English army it was easy enough to cow the wild Irish tribesmen: to tame them was impossible. Henry planted garrisons in various centres, received the homage of the native chiefs, confirmed his barons in their new-won lands, and returned again to England. The true conquest of Ireland was not yet.

During his absence, however, trouble of a very different sort had been brewing over in France; and soon the king had war enough to make him forget all else. His eldest sons, Henry and Richard, to whom he had given control over his continental provinces, were of the same wild ambitious temper as himself. Their young heads had latterly been filled with treasonable notions by his disloyal wife, Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine; and in the same year that Henry returned from Ireland they rebelled. To make matters worse, they found a powerful ally in the King of France, Louis VII. Between Louis and Henry there was never much love lost. Henry was always glad to take whatever opportunity he could of extending his influence over fresh parts of France; and Louis on his part would not have been sorry to see him ejected from what parts he already held. This family quarrel came as a heaven-sent chance to the Frenchman. He, the two princes, and several discontented members of the English baronage appeared a formidable combination; but Henry was one too many for them all. Wherever he appeared, he conquered; and, when at last the rebels made their peace, Henry felt strong enough to pardon the disobedience of his sons. Only for his wife he had no forgiveness, and she never saw his court again. A few years of peace, however, were all that was allowed him. Louis VII died and another and stouter king reigned in his stead. Philip Augustus, the new king, was one of the greatest monarchs who ever bore the Fleur-de-lys; and throughout his life he stood for the unity of France and he never rested from his efforts to turn the English off French soil. Of the two rebel princes, the elder was now dead, but Richard remained restless as ever, and further embittered by the obvious preference which his father showed towards his younger brother John. Even Richard's succession to the English crown seemed insecure, and, though after his recent failure it took a good deal to turn the son once

more against his father, jealousy and Philip Augustus at length prevailed. In 1187 a fresh challenge was offered to King Henry, and this time he was unequal to the strain. Though barely fifty-six, his strength was spent; he fled before his enemies and at last was forced to a humiliating peace, whereby he confirmed Richard in his succession to the crown and bought off Philip with hard cash. One last and fatal blow remained. On the list of those who were implicated in this second revolt, and for whom his royal pardon was required, he found the name of his favourite son, Prince John. The treachery of his children crushed even his proud spirit. "Let the rest go as it will," he cried with bitterness, and turned his face to the wall—a dying and broken-hearted man. He had deserved better treatment at the hands of fate.

CHAPTER X

CHIVALRY AND CRUSADE

I

The English Language.—During the first Henry's reign, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman inhabitants of England were beginning, as has been said, to form a single race. Under the second Henry this union became well-nigh an accomplished fact. The Norman baron's son had taken to himself an English wife, and when he, in turn, had daughters of his own, he married them to Englishmen. So the stocks mixed, and to draw a hard and fast line between the two was soon impossible. In language, however, a distinction lingered on. The nobility still continued to talk Norman-French, despising the Anglo-Saxon of the peasants as unintelligible jargon, mere "wlafferynge, chiterynge, harrynge, and garrynge grisbayting," as it seemed to them. Hence, just as Latin was the language of the learned, being used by monks, scholars, chroniclers, and writers of official documents, so French remained (both now and for centuries to come) the language of polite society. It was talked by the king and at his court; even Henry II himself understood no English when he succeeded to the crown, and it was only on the rarest of occasions that a sovereign would address his subjects in their native speech. In the schools too (such as there were) the children were taught French, and this very fact served in the end to bridge the gulf between the classes. For the average Englishman began to borrow in his daily talk from both vocabularies; while he took "ox" and "sheep" from the Anglo-Saxon, he equally took "beef" and "mutton" from the Norman-French. So, too, in "fowl" and "poultry," "hunt" and "chase," "horse" and "palfrey," "lord" and "baron," "king" and "prince," the first word in each case is of Anglo-Saxon origin, the second of French; and we see the two vocabularies employed thus side by side, and almost without discrimination, for one and the same thing.

In this manner the tongues blended, and by the time that we reach Chaucer and the fourteenth century, the two threads have become inextricably interwoven, and of the two is formed an English speech, awkward perhaps for us to understand, queerly spelt, and containing many words long since forgotten, yet for all that essentially the same as the English which we ourselves speak to-day.

English Customs.—But long before the rich and poor had come to adopt a common language, there can be no doubt that they acknowledged a community of race, and at the close of the twelfth century England was beginning to find her true self at last. Men recognised the fact, not without pride, and felt that it was a fine thing to be an Englishman. Her writers praised the country in no measured terms: “Engelond ful of pley, fremen well worthy to pleye; fre men, fre tonges, hert fre; free health all the leden (people); their lond is more fre, more better than their tonge.” Slowly, too, there was emerging a national character to match this boasted freedom, a character which was neither Saxon nor Norman, but a mixture of them both. The mirthful, jolly, good-natured, happy-go-lucky Englishman was regarded by his Continental neighbours with a slightly shocked surprise, tempered perhaps by just a touch of envy. For, while the English people took life less seriously than others, they undoubtedly got more enjoyment out of it. They loved the open air. Every class had its favourite pastime; hunting for the rich, and for the others sports of many kinds; they danced, held cock-fights, baited bears, skated in winter-time, and even learned to kick a football in their youth. Nor was the time far distant when the archers’ butts would be set up on every village green. They gloried in gay fantastic dresses, told tales, recited ballads, kept apes and peacocks and other curious pets, and, above all, they never lacked an appetite for food. The capacity of the mediæval diner was astounding. A meal of ten to twenty courses was not among the rich anything extraordinary, and royalty did even better. This is part of the menu of a banquet given at Westminster in 1429: “Boars’ heads in castles of gold and armed, a red leche with lions carven therein, custard-royal with leopards of gold sitting therein and holding a fleur-de-lys, pig endored, crane roasted, great breme, jelly-partie written and noted with ‘Te Deum Laudamus,’ and roast mutton.” Even the breakfast served to a Lord and Lady not much later sounds to our ears substantial: “Furst, a Loif of Brede in Trenchors, 2 Manchetts (fine white loaves), a quart of Bere, a quart of Wyne, 2 Pecys of Saltfish, 6 Baconn’d Herryng, 3 white Herryng or a Dysche of Sproits (sprats).” The peasants, it is true, lived chiefly upon vegetables and bread and cheese, but the yeomen farmer and the artisan kept a good table. “It snowed meat and drink in his house,” says Chaucer of the Franklin in his tale. Drink, indeed, was always a prevailing vice: “They make it their business,” so a foreigner complains, “to drink full goblets, for an Englishman will take a cup of wine and drain it saying, ‘Ge bi: a vu,’ which is to say, ‘It behoveth you to drink as much as I drink.’” It was

scarcely an abstemious nation: there were ale and cider, mead and mulberry-wine for all, and for the well-to-do imported wines from France.

But let not our picture be too rosy. Men's condition varied much according to their station, and there was an enormous gulf between the few rich and the many poor. The share of life's good things was very scanty for the "villein," or peasant labourer. Some land indeed he possessed; for the 'manor' or estate to which he was attached for life, would be portioned out among the various villagers. Of the long narrow strips into which the arable land was divided, each man would have his quota,—some more, some less, and the lord of the manor, of course, most of all; and this arable, consisting as it always did of three huge open fields, due to be sown in a fixed triennial rotation,¹ each man's strips would, by an equitable, but most uneconomical arrangement, be widely scattered among the three. On the common meadow equally, as on the waste beyond, he would have his grazing rights and so forth shared with other villagers, and defined by the traditional custom of the Manor Court. But while 'manor custom' secures for the villein a certain modest means of livelihood, it also lays upon him certain heavy and unescapable obligations. The tale of work which he must render to his feudal over-lord takes approximately one day in every two: 140 or 150 days out of the year is common, and in one case, at least, the number rises to as much as 259. The work is hard and the villein may not absent himself on pain of fine. "From the whole village of little Ogbourne, except 7: for not coming to wash the lord's sheep, fine 6s. 8d.," so runs the verdict of a Wiltshire manor court; and no doubt the fine was paid. He must give good honest work, too, or suffer for it: "William Jordan, in mercy for bad ploughing, on the lord's land, fine 6d." Sixpence was in those days a valuable sum and would have bought William Jordan a sheep or a goose or ten dozen eggs. Nor must he, under penalty of law, quit the village or estate in which he has been born. "The court present that William Noah's son is the born bond-man of the lord and a fugitive and dwells at Dodford; therefore he must be sought." The villein's life was a hard life, and his grievances were genuine enough. Yet truth to tell, he scarcely had the wits to understand them, much less to air them. He could neither read nor write. His experience was too narrow to conceive the possibility of better things. Custom had made him what he was; what custom had made him she had made his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather before him, and who was he to question her decree? And, meanwhile, if his master was a generous master, who was not too strict in the enforcement of his fines, who did not keep too close a watch on how the wheat threshed out, and who would allow him to marry his daughter to what man he willed, the villein was tolerably content. The time had not yet come when he could think of rebel-

¹ Thus, one of the three fields would be in wheat or rye, a second in barley or oats, the third fallow; next year the first would lie fallow and so on.

ling openly against his lot, and, if he grumbled, it was behind his master's back.

The Towns.—The townsman was more prosperous. Trade throve, and for weavers, dyers, tanners, smiths, shoemakers and the rest, there was good money to be earned. These men were slaves to no man. They stood upon their rights, and, for the better protection of their trade and to secure themselves good prices, each craft banded together in a Union, called a Guild. These Guilds grew very powerful, and they came to play a great part in the organisation and government of towns. For more and more, as trade grew in volume and importance, the townsfolk began to raise their heads and assert their independence. They resented meddling from the barons; they spoke out if taxes were too high, and (as Matilda learnt at London to her cost) they would stand no nonsense even from the crown. For enterprise and high spirit, so rare among the dull-witted peasants of the soil, was natural to the merchants, craftsmen, and apprentices of cities. This energy showed itself in many forms. Coarse practical jokes were all too common, such as "taking off the hoods of people and laying hands upon them." Riots and drunken brawls abounded, in which men were killed. Free fights would frequently occur between the townsfolk and the servants of a baron or a bishop. But such high spirits found an outlet, too, in less illegal ways. Carnivals and shows were always popular; great fairs were held, to which men from all parts gathered, buying and selling and making general holiday; minstrels would be there and jugglers and wizard fortune-tellers; plays of a rough humorous sort were acted; processions and pageants gave frequent opportunity of showing off fine dresses. Even religious festivals were an occasion for display and banqueting. For careless, rollicking, full-blooded fellows as they were, religion still claimed a large share of men's attention. They gave alms to beggars with lavish hand. They spent enormous sums on building and beautifying their churches, and not a few, let us remember, devoted themselves to the religious life. The cowl was popular as ever, over a hundred monasteries being newly endowed in the hideous anarchy of Stephen's reign, and in some strange manner it would seem that the same high spirit of overflowing energy which drove many to be reckless sinners, turned others equally towards the scarcely less reckless self-sacrifice of saints. Men took the vow in the enthusiasm of youth and without counting the full cost, and, even though new and stricter orders had been introduced, this only added to their zeal. The ways of the old-fashioned Benedictines had grown lax; they still, it is true, worked hard: they farmed, they copied manuscripts, they visited the poor and sick. But, for the rest, they lived more like ordinary mortals than like monks, keeping pets and falcons, sitting down to a ten-course dinner, and even hunting with the hounds. Such a life, though infinitely more useful to mankind at large, was not austere or rigorous enough for many who could think of nothing else but the salvation of their own immortal souls. So, when there came over from the Continent a set of monks

calling themselves Cistercians, who were anxious to restore the forgotten ideals of St. Benedict and to practise the holy life with full manly vigour, it was not unnatural that they were well received. The rich contributed to their funds with redoubled generosity. New abbeys were built, and these were planted of set purpose as far as possible from the abodes of men, at Fountains among the desolate Yorkshire dales or at Tintern among the woodlands of the Wye. To these remote and tranquil havens many were attracted, thankful to escape from a rude world and to forget, if they might, its sinful ways in the exercise of fasting, prayer and hard manual toil. It was a strange age which from the same material could produce such opposite extremes of piety and crime. But there was a stranger contrast yet.

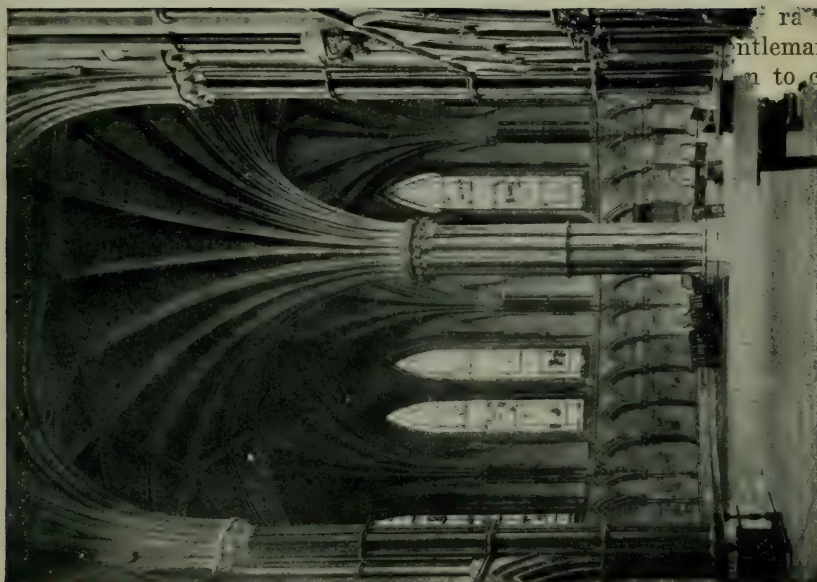
The Barons.—No picture of the time can be complete with its leading characters left out. The very centre and pivot of mediæval society was the baronage. For the support of these men three-quarters of the nation laboured with toil and sweat; by their personal prowess the country's battles were decided; through their act kings' crowns were lost or won. Nor did their power rest solely upon the privilege of birth. A man of great character and grit was the successful baron, and the qualities he needed were little different from those which went to the making of a successful king. He had extensive lands and manors to administer; quarrels and disputes of all sorts to decide; soldiers to train and to command. As wealth was counted, he was wealthy, not in money indeed, but in farms and stock and horses, in castles and instruments of war; for in those times a large landowner was as powerful as a millionaire, and a suit of mail armour was almost equivalent in value to a motor-car to-day. Luxury, however, was not among the baron's failings: his was no soft or idle life, the castle or, as was now more usual, the stonebuilt manor house, in which he lived was comfortable and draughty, without glass in the windows or carpets on the floors. Privacy there was none, for the entire household lived, ate, and often slept in the single castle hall. Culture was rare, for outside the monasteries books were scarce and few but monks had either ability or taste to read them. The baron's energies (and they were boundless) found vent in other ways. Outdoor sport was his favourite occupation, and he was never happier than when flying his falcons or following the stag. And, did he crave more perilous excitements, he could take his fill in war. Adventure was the ruling passion of his life, and the biographies of many barons read less like sober history than like fairy-tales.

For sheer romance and devilry the record of Geoffrey de Mandeville, who lived in Stephen's reign, would be difficult to beat. Unscrupulous scoundrel as he was, one cannot but admire the astounding vigour and audacity of the man. His support was first purchased by the King, who made him Earl of Essex, but on Stephen's capture he went over to Matilda, who made him Custodian of the Tower. On Stephen's release, he changed sides once again; but, still not content, he came back to Matilda, in consideration of some further bribe. He was arrested (on

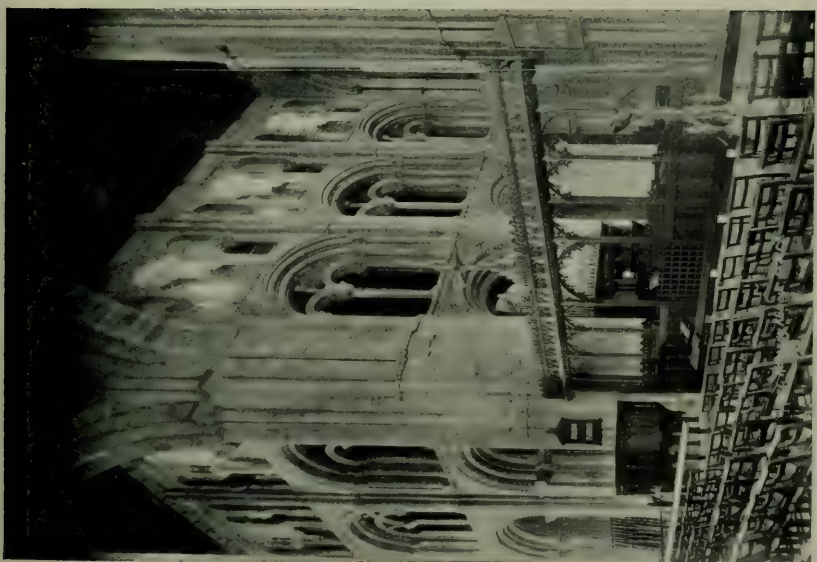
it's page, if you please, of treachery), but laughed at the King's authority being hung out of Stephen's presence in a fine passion like "a runaway horse." Gathering a band of desperadoes to him, he went off to the East Anglian fens. There he became the terror of the country-side, and spent the remainder of his unhallowed life, plundering travellers, kidnapping children, sacking towns and burning villages, and all the while defying and evading the King's officers like a bandit chief. Geoffrey de Mandeville is a type of the mediæval baron at his worst.

Chivalry.—Now about the same time as this preposterous scoundrel was at large, another Geoffrey was making history in a different fashion. In 1147 Geoffrey, the Archdeacon of Monmouth, published in a book the famous story of King Arthur and his Knights. Thanks to Malory and Tennyson, who have retold it, the tale is now familiar; but in those days it was a startling novelty to read of kings whose life was wholly devoted to the service of mankind, of knights sent forth, not to plunder the defenceless but to set wrongs right, of wars conducted in the name of God, and perilous journeys undertaken to catch a vision of the Holy Grail. Yet, novel as was the theme, the tale was immensely popular, and it is clear that something more had happened in the world than the mere publication of a myth. Whatever its origin (and no book, we may be sure, could of itself produce it), the Age of Chivalry had dawned. The full splendour of its noonday indeed was still far off: years and even centuries must pass before the ideals of Geoffrey ascribed to Arthur and his knights could take effect, and the cruel instincts of a barbaric age be shed away. Yet even now, in the twelfth century itself, a change was coming.

New ideas were slowly taking root, and new virtues were proclaimed by the mother and author of all chivalry, the Church. Instead of persecuting the weak, it was henceforth to be a privilege to defend them. Courtesy was to become a duty, above all to the gentler sex. Every true knight was at once the slave and champion of some fair one. He wore his mistress's handkerchief or glove upon his helm; he upheld her name and beauty against all comers in the lists. And among fellow-knights no less was courtesy due, at first towards friends, and then as time went on, towards foes, until we read how the Black Prince, fresh from the battle, would seat his captured enemy at table and wait in person on his needs before taking meat himself. Thus a code of etiquette and honourable conduct was established and accepted, by which even war's barbarity was softened. Hostilities became a game to be played according to the rules, and whether in the tournament or on the battlefield, the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship was rigorously maintained. Chivalry, in short, became the fashion, and not least (strange as it may seem) among the wild, fierce, restless spirits of whom we have been speaking. Yet not so strange, perhaps, for adventure is still adventure in whatever cause, and to slay some fearful dragon or to rescue forlorn maidens is not in reality less valorous than to plunder travellers or burn towns. Even though dragons and imprisoned maidens



EARLY ENGLISH (13th Cent.) CHURCH, LIN



NORMAN CHURCH, ROMSEY

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were not in practice to be met with, it was pleasant, at any rate, to dream such deeds of daring, and meanwhile to play the gentleman, if only in a tilting-match, seemed somehow more romantic than to cheat and rob.¹

Character of Crusades.—But the ardour of chivalry was not yet satisfied. The tournament was a good game, but no more than that. There was glamour in it, and excitement, if you will: the blood might well be stirred at the sound of the challenge and the trumpet, the clatter of the mailed men mounting and the horses' tramp; the eye might rejoice in the glitter of the knights' gay quarterings and the bright dresses of the lady onlookers; the heart might thrill at the thunder of the charge, the shock of collision, the triumph over an adversary unhorsed. But there was still lacking in all this that which might satisfy the soul. The men of the Middle Ages seldom did anything by halves. If chivalry meant in very truth devotion to the right, if the true knight owned his service to the noblest call of all, then the only cause worth championing was God's cause, and the only adversary worth fighting was the Devil. But how and where was the Devil to be found? Happily about this time, and as if in answer to this unspoken question, the Devil himself appeared—in Palestine, where he drove the Christians from the Holy City and acted in a manner generally in keeping with his character. In plain words, the Devil had made his appearance in the guise of the infidel Turk, and it had become the duty of all good knights and true to make mincemeat of him on the spot. So Christendom, both the best and the worst of it, went forth upon Crusade.

There is nothing stranger, perhaps, in the whole history of mankind than this sudden religious enthusiasm, which swept Europe like a wave, and with a force so irresistible that it drew men of every character and class and country to the Holy Land. The crusading spirit was infectious. At times it would die almost down, then it would spread again and rise to fever heat, so that men's minds were quite possessed by it and all sense of practical considerations was forgotten. Troops of people, poor as well as rich, often without arms or equipment or proper means of sustenance, would march to the ports, take ship and sail for the Syrian coast, only to be lost at sea or perish on some distant and inhospitable shore. Even children would leave their parents and take the eastward road: one party of boys and girls reached Constantinople; their fate may be imagined. Every class was in it, but to none was the appeal more strong than to the baron class. The thought of adventure in strange lands beyond the seas was tempting in itself; but adventure was not all. However careless and ungodly had been their previous lives, the fact remains that to very many the call of the Cross was a genuine

¹ Yet the application of the principles of chivalry was strangely limited. Mercy, shewn to enemy knights, was by no means extended to unoffending villeins. The champion who fought in the lists for some fair lady, would often enough beat his wife at home, and compel his daughters at a tender age to marry men they had never seen.

enthusiasm. The Church herself had not been backward with promises of spiritual reward, and the greater was the burden of sin upon their conscience, the more men welcomed the opportunity of purchasing their soul's salvation on Crusade. Some, indeed, in the flush of enthusiasm, even took vows like monks, and the two great knightly orders of the Hospitallers and the Templars were established, which imposed a strict discipline and much self-sacrifice upon their members, and exacted an oath of poverty, chastity, and life-long obedience to the rule. Truth to tell, the mediæval knight was an almost inexplicable mixture of low passions and high ideals: "When he was good, he was very, very good, and when he was bad, he was horrid." And so it came to pass that a host of warriors who at home had been guilty of every sort of crime, and who in battle with the Turk did deeds of unspeakable brutality, had still their moments of deep religious fervour. To discover a supposed fragment of the true and original Cross was to them more precious than the discovery of a gold-mine, and when for the first time they mounted the hills of Judah and caught a glimpse of the city of Jerusalem outstretched beyond, they could not forbear from falling in an ecstasy upon their knees, and shedding tears of unfeigned gratitude and joy.

II

England's part in the Crusades was less than that of other nations. Englishmen never rose to such heights of enthusiasm or folly as were seen in France. The great mass of the nation stayed at home, content to minister (whether grudgingly through taxes or willingly through gifts) to the upkeep of the men who went. Of the barons only the more adventurous or pious marched themselves. They were not very numerous, and it would be a great mistake to interpret every cross-legged effigy reposing in our churches as the record of a Crusading knight. Indeed, but for one circumstance, the expedition could not have been regarded as a national concern at all; that circumstance, however, was decisive: the expedition marched and fought under the banner of the English king. Richard Coeur-de-Lion, second son of Henry II, and his successor on the throne, was not the man to stay at home while there was crusading to be done. He had good reasons of his own (as we shall see) for desiring the reconquest of Jerusalem, but, these apart, nature had marked him out for the leading part he played. A warrior to the backbone, a very Hercules in strength, and a captain of no ordinary skill, Richard possessed, in addition, the true knight-errant's soul. His generous, passionate, impulsive nature exulted in the make-believe of chivalry and the adventurous quest of noble deeds. In none, perhaps, were the opposite qualities of courtesy and violence, religious zeal and quarrelsome ambition more strangely intermingled. He had the magnanimity, when dying, to pardon the French sharp-shooter who had struck him down; yet it was the same man who at Acre first promised the Turkish garrison their lives and then hanged them in cold

blood. Both on its good side and its bad, Richard was a type of the age in which he lived, and, not altogether without cause, tradition has chosen to regard him as its hero.

The Third Crusade.—Richard's Crusade, though the most famous of them all, was not the first. More than a century before, and just ten years after Hastings, Palestine had originally fallen to the Turk. The effects of this disaster were immediate. The old Arab inhabitants had hitherto been friendly to the Christians, and had allowed free access to the Holy Sepulchre. All this was now altered. The Turks maltreated Christian residents, defiled the sacred places, murdered pilgrims. All Europe stood aghast, and, while men were still doubting what was to be done, there appeared in north-eastern France a strange prophetic figure—an old man, white-bearded, riding on a mule with cross in hand, and proclaiming with fiery energy a holy war against the Turk. Peter the Hermit, as he was called, passed on from town to town, and wherever he went men left their trades and businesses to take the cross. Talk of the Crusade was soon on every tongue; castles and cottages poured forth their volunteers. But the cause had been taken up by a greater than the Hermit. The Pope himself was moving: he had summoned a band of leading warriors to Clermont, and in November, 1095, had given them, kneeling, his final benediction. Thus was launched the First Crusade. Its success was swift. Jerusalem was recaptured and a Christian king set up. That honourable post was first held by Godfrey de Bouillon, a baron of Lorraine, though he indeed refused to take the royal title or wear a golden crown in the city where Christ had been crowned with thorns; but by and by it passed to the princes of Anjou, the house to which, through his father Geoffrey, Henry II was kin. The Angevins were brave warriors, but in time their hold on Palestine had grown precarious. The Turks had renewed their menace, which even the Second Crusade had little power to check, and in the last years of Henry's reign the Holy City had been lost once more. Henry had himself projected a crusade, but death cut short his plans, and it devolved on Richard to execute his father's purpose and restore his unthroned kinsman to Jerusalem.

If an alliance of crowned heads was any guarantee of victory, the success of the Third Crusade seemed well assured. Besides Richard, it was joined by Philip Augustus, King of France, and by Frederic Barbarossa, the aged Emperor of Germany, among a host of lesser princes were the Counts of Flanders and of Burgundy, and Leopold, Duke of Austria. Yet, from the outset ill-luck pursued the enterprise. The Emperor was drowned upon the march in Asia Minor. Very few of his German troops reached Palestine. Worse still, a jealousy sprang up between the Kings of France and England, and during a brief stay in Sicily they almost came to blows. On reaching the Syrian coast, they found things in a parlous state. Every stronghold except Tyre was lost, the Christian forces, fighting for the recovery of Acre, were starving, and the hungry soldiers were eating grass and horse-flesh and offal taken

from the dogs. The French and English reinforcements had come none too soon; nevertheless, their arrival put fresh heart into the siege. To win back Acre was at all costs necessary, for no other port was fit to serve as a base; and Richard, whom all hailed as the one capable commander, determined to continue the attack. The task was long and

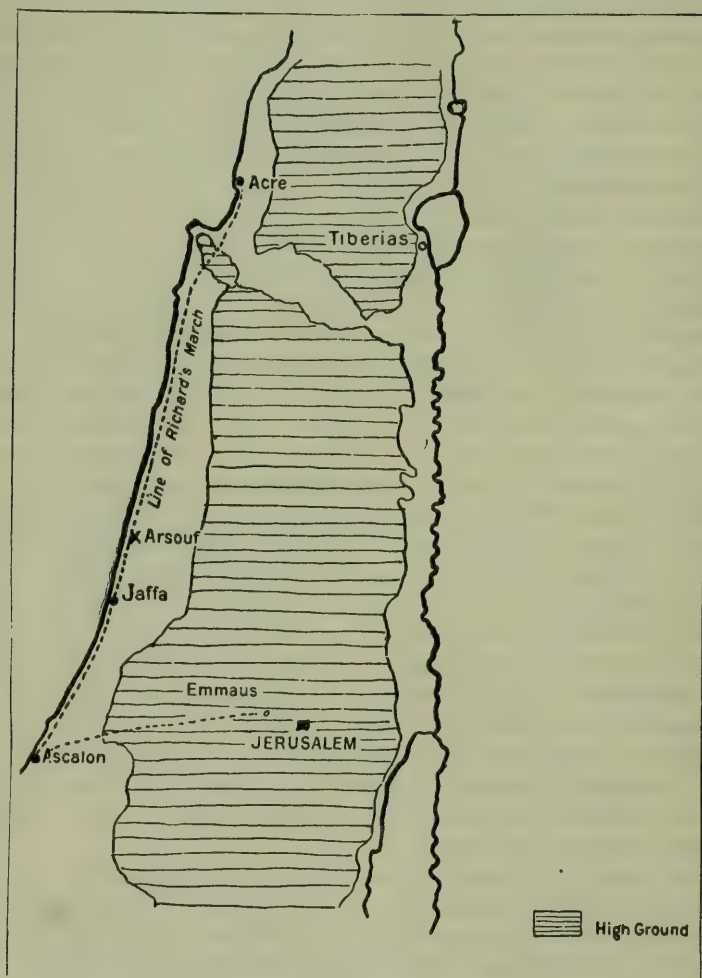


FIG. 8.—PALESTINE, ILLUSTRATING THIRD CRUSADE.

bitter. The Christians had brought with them wooden towers and long-range catapults and other instruments of siege; but the Turks retaliated by pouring boiling oil on the assailants, and setting fire to catapults and towers by missiles of Greek fire, a concoction of sulphur, pitch, nitre, petroleum, and other inflammable materials. When the final assault took place, Richard himself was ill; but he was carried to his post before the walls on a silken couch, from which he directed opera-

tions and even helped in aiming his siege artillery. Nor was such perseverance vain. The wall was breached, the garrison surrendered, and the port of Acre was won. Yet no sooner was this victory achieved than the old disastrous jealousies broke out afresh. Philip Augustus had not forgotten Sicily, and he now announced his intention of returning home to France. Ill he certainly was, so ill that the nails came off his fingers and the hair fell from his brows; but none the less ill-health was not the true cause of his departure, and, once back home in Europe, he was to deal his one-time ally a treacherous blow in the back. Leopold of Austria, too, had a grudge against King Richard, who, for an insult levelled at the English flag, had ordered the duke's own banner to be cast into a sewer. Like Philip, Leopold went home to meditate revenge: we shall hear of both again.

Acre, the scene of Richard's first success, is situated slightly to the north of that single projection on the Syrian coast which we know by the name of Mount Carmel. Sixty miles southward along the coast, and almost on a level with Jerusalem, lies Jaffa, likewise a harbour of no mean importance. The taking of Jaffa formed Richard's next objective: it was the natural base from which to make his inland march upon Jerusalem itself. The route along the shore was desolate and dry and the Christian army suffered terribly. Despite the linen surcoats that they wore, the sun beat down upon their armour till it nearly scorched their flesh. Provisions ran out, and they were driven to eating the very horses that died upon the march. Poisonous flies infested them, and venomous snakes, which could only be kept at a distance by a continual clatter of their shields—and all the while the enemy's horsemen hung upon their flanks. The Turks were riders of extraordinary skill and speed. Their commander, Saladin, was a general of unusual audacity and cunning, and he saw that to harass the Christians was far better tactics than to attack them. When, however, Richard's army was approaching the actual neighbourhood of Jaffa, Saladin gave battle at Arsouf. His forces outnumbered the Christians by three to one, and victory seemed secure. But the Turk had not reckoned with the quality of the English knights. Impatient of a defensive action, they burst out, as the Fyrd had done at Hastings, in flat disobedience of their orders; but, by sheer fighting, they carried all before them, and Richard himself, marking the opportunity, joined in the charge. His prowess threw all others into the shade. "Wherever he turned brandishing his sword, he carved a wide path before him. He cut down the enemy like a reaper with his sickle . . . till the corpses of dead Turks extended for over half a mile. . . . There might be seen numbers lying prostrate on the ground, horses riderless in crowds, wounded lamenting their hard fate, others at their last gasp and weltering in their gore: many lay headless, whilst their lifeless forms were trampled underfoot by friend and foe." It was a grim carnage, and the Turkish host barely escaped annihilation. The way along the coast lay open, and Richard entered Jaffa at the end of summer, 1191.

March on Jerusalem.—The Christians had, as it seemed, now reached their final stage. Richard seized Askalon as a forward base, and began his march upon Jerusalem. Yet the nearer he approached the city, the more impossible appeared his task. Winter was at hand: his forces were wholly insufficient for a siege, and his communications with the coast were doubtfully secure. In the last days of December, having penetrated within two days' marching of his goal, Richard despaired and, with a heavy heart, turned his back for the first time upon Jerusalem.

The winter was spent at Askalon, preparing for the spring campaign, but the omens were anything but reassuring. Bad news began to reach the Knight of the unrestful state of England, and of Philip's intrigues in France; quarrels sprang up among his followers, and the crown of Jerusalem (though Jerusalem was not yet won) was the subject of hot dispute. It was with deep misgivings and a sense of coming failure that Richard set out in spring to climb the Judæan hills once more. Once more he and his men came within striking distance of the city, and were even able, from a hill-top near Emmaus, to descry its very towers; and once more Richard was compelled to turn his back upon the prize and retrace his journey to the coast. It was a cruel ending to his dreams, and, rather than look upon the city which he could not save, he held his shield (so legend says) before his eyes and lamented his own unworthiness. The one course now left him was to treat for terms, but even this course gave little promise of success. To the Turks, no less than to the Christians, the struggle was a Holy War: they too were fighting for the honour of God and Mahomet his prophet. Saladin himself had sworn he would never rest while a single unbeliever remained upon the earth. Nevertheless, a truce was eventually concluded, and during the truce the Christians were promised free access to the Holy Sepulchre. Then Richard at last set sail for Europe and left Palestine for ever. The Crusades dragged on spasmodically for another sixty years until, under the saintly King of France, Louis IX, one last attempt was made. It failed, and Jerusalem remained in Turkish hands—till quite recently in the Great War it was recovered yet again.

King Richard's troubles, however, were far from ended. He had made many foes in Palestine, and they were on the watch for his return. Deeming it prudent to avoid the ports of France, he sailed by the Adriatic, and was shipwrecked and attempted to cross Austria in disguise. There he was recognised, and fell into the hands of his old enemy, the Duke Leopold. Leopold handed him into the Emperor's keeping, and the ransom named for his release was 100,000 marks. England was hard put to it in finding such a sum: even the plate and treasure of the churches were called in; but the greater part of the ransom was duly paid, and Richard set out for home. He had been absent too long. John, his faithless brother, was stirring up trouble in the Midlands, and Philip Augustus, still bent upon revenge, was threatening Normandy. Richard spent six months in England; he crushed

John's revolt, forgave him, and turned to France. Here, during six years of skirmishes and sieges, he contrived to hold his own. But at last, in a petty squabble with some rebel lord of Aquitaine, he received a fatal wound. The physicians could not check the gangrene that set in, and, with a last act of chivalrous forgiveness to the author of his death, Richard passed away. His life had been a failure, but at least he had failed heroically.

CHAPTER XI

LACK-LAND AND LAW-BREAKER

No English king, perhaps, had ever less direct influence upon the country than King Richard. During his ten years of rule ten months at most was all he spent in England; and the most important fact about his reign is undoubtedly his absence. "While the cat is away, the mice are sure to play." But in this case, happily, the more obstreperous of the mice had gone off with the cat to the Crusade. And those left behind were more sedate, more contented, and less eager to run wild than their ancestors had been in Stephen's time. The horror of the anarchy was not repeated. Not merely had the barons learnt its bitter lesson, but they had endured the stern schooling of King Henry's reign; and now, when left to manage affairs for themselves, they began to realise their own responsibility and to be conscious of some duty towards the State. In short, it was not from the nobility that treason was most to be feared now; it came from another quarter whence, least of all, it should have come.

John and Philip.—When Richard sailed for Palestine, the chief power of government had been entrusted to a bishop, William Longchamp of Ely, the Chancellor of the Realm. He was a faithful servant of his absent master, and, though of mean birth and wanting tact, he played the part of Regent with ability. One mischief-maker, however, Richard had left behind, who was more than the Chancellor's match—his brother John. Why anybody ever trusted John remains a mystery. His father trusted him, and we have seen how he broke Henry's heart. Mean, cowardly, grasping and unscrupulous, he was incapable of loyal affection and unredeemed by any single grace. "God's Teeth" was his favourite expletive; his temper was uncontrollable, and often in fits of passion the very features of his face became so distorted as to be beyond recognition—a disgusting man. Yet Richard, not content with leaving him behind, gave him four earldoms, thinking to keep him quiet. Such generosity was utterly thrown away. John was ready, as we have seen, to organise revolt behind his brother's back, and just as ready, when it failed, to grovel at his feet. He made the Chancellor's position so intolerable that Longchamp was compelled to flee the land. Above all, he never ceased from underhand intrigues with Richard's worst enemy,

King Philip of France. During Richard's captivity a bargain was struck between the two whereby Philip was to receive a part of Richard's French possessions at the price of helping John to get the rest. On Richard's return the plan, of course, collapsed, but the harm was done. The French King did not relinquish his ambitions, and this John discovered to his cost, when in 1199 he succeeded to his brother's crown. For the traitor always reaps as he has sown; and troubles across the channel soon came thick and fast.

First, although Normandy and Aquitaine stood true to England, the middle provinces of Anjou, Touraine and Maine fell rapidly away and linked themselves with France. Then Philip and John, as traitors will, fell out. Past promises went for nothing, and Philip, so far from backing John, supported a rival claimant to the English throne. This was John's nephew Arthur, son of an elder brother long since dead. Though still a boy, Arthur's claim to England was as good as John's, or better. John knew this, knew too that Arthur was more popular than he; so, when an accident of warfare delivered the boy into his hands, he was not troubled with his prisoner long. Arthur disappeared mysteriously. The current story was that John had ordered the gaoler to put out his eyes, that the gaoler refused, and that John had then murdered the boy with his own hands and thrown the body in the Seine. Dead men tell no tales and the truth is never likely to be known. What seems certain, however, is that Arthur's removal did John's cause little good. His French subjects turned from him with loathing; and Philip chose the moment to renew with redoubled energy his attempts on Normandy.

Château Gaillard.—The natural barrier which severs Normandy from central France is the valley of the Seine. Hold that line and Normandy will stand; lose it and the whole province must surely fall. Some years before, Richard, with a shrewd eye for that line's defence, had built a powerful fortress at one of its most salient points. The Château Gaillard or Saucy Castle, as he called it, was a masterpiece of engineering skill. It was perched on a high rock, three sides of which fall sheer away; on the fourth side, where the slope is more accessible, was constructed a strong outwork, which was practically a separate fort, and which was parted from the main defences by a broad dry moat. To carry this outwork was an assailant's first and necessary step; that done, he might reach across the moat, the main quadrilateral of defence; even were this too carried, there was still an "inner ward" more formidable yet, to which the defenders might retire and which in its turn contained a high-walled donjon-keep. Thus the Château possessed, in addition to the outwork, three concentric rings of stout defences, each to be taken in its turn before the place could be finally reduced. Had John been half the general Richard was, or had he even provided the garrison with adequate support, the Château might have been held indefinitely. As it was, John lost it in six months.

The details of its capture throw so much light on the siege warfare

of the times that they seem worthy of mention here. In the reduction of a strong-walled castle the initial business was to breach the walls.

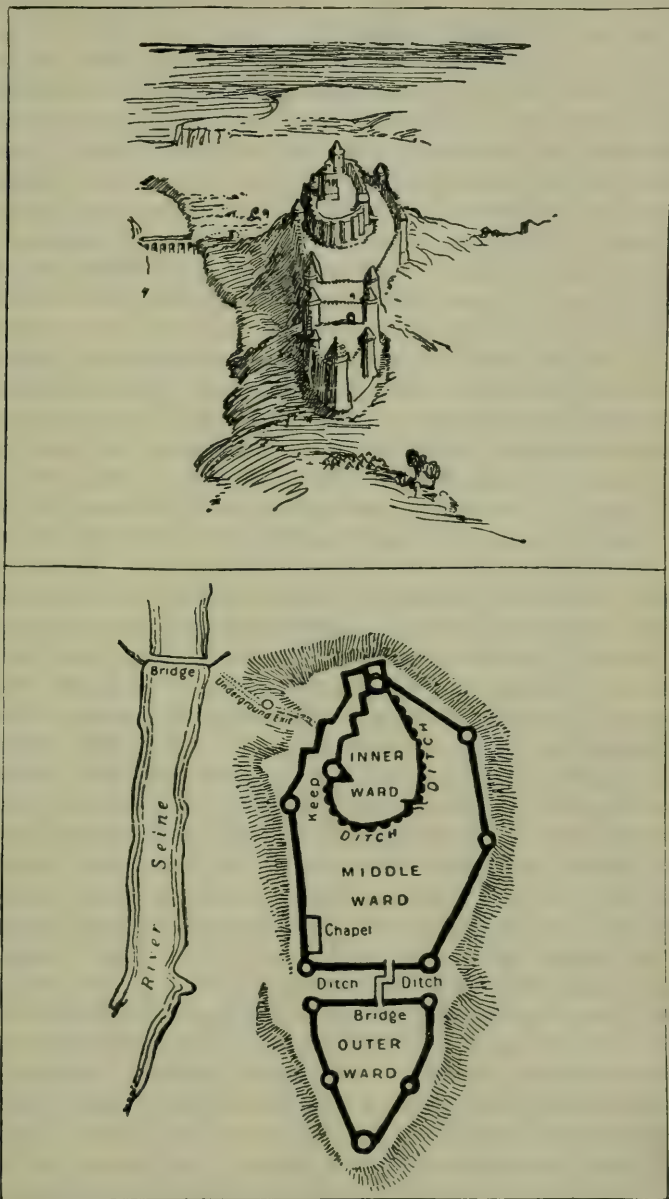


FIG. 9. CHÂTEAU GAILLARD, 1196.

This was done usually by sapping. A portable timber roof or shed, protected against fire by a covering of raw hide, was first pushed against

the walls. Under this shelter, the sappers set to work; beginning at the corner-stones they extracted the lower courses of the masonry, and inserted in their place a wooden prop. Then, filling the cavity with combustible material, and setting light to it, they retired to watch the outcome of their handiwork. As the flames caught, the wooden props collapsed, and the stone courses above them, losing their support, subsided; if all went well, a portion of the wall crashed down and opened an entrance to the storming party. Before this method of attack the outwork of the Château Gaillard quickly fell, and the garrison was driven back upon the main defence. The approach to this was much more difficult. The moat protecting it was deep; the causeway which led across the moat was of a zig-zag shape and effectually prevented the bringing up of siege-artillery. The foundations of the walls themselves began at some height above the bottom of the moat, and, though the French sappers tried to reach them by climbing on daggers stuck into the chalk, they could make little headway. The siege must have come to a standstill but for a clever ruse. Built into the west wall of the Castle was a chapel, the windows of which gave out over the rock: to these a party of Frenchmen climbed and (since no attack was expected from this quarter) clambered in unobserved. Too late by perhaps a minute the alarm was given; the chapel doors were blocked and burning faggots piled against them to smoke the enemy out. It was in vain: by ill luck the wind shifted its direction and blew back the smoke upon the garrison, who now had no choice but to retire upon the inner ward.

But the siege was not yet over: the French were on the hill, but they were not its masters. The fortifications of the Inner Ward were the most carefully devised of all, being faced with a series of semicircular projections, like a row of round turrets set side by side. The absence of corners rendered the sapping of these walls extremely difficult, and to breach them siege engines were called into play. The most favourite type of engine was a sort of gigantic catapult, consisting of a long timber beam acting on a pivot: one end of the beam was loaded with a heavy weight, the other fitted with a receptacle for missile stones. The latter end was first depressed and fastened with a catch; upon release it flew up, answering to the weight, and in its flight discharged its burden of stones with an appalling force and to a considerable range. Under such battering the walls of the Inner Ward were shaken; a breach was made; and the garrison, worn out by long privation had reduced in numbers to 140 men, abandoned all further effort at defence. Instead of holding the Keep, they fled by the postern gate, where they were cut off and captured to a man.

John Loses Normandy.—The capture of the Château laid open the valley of the Seine. Normandy was lost and John's endeavours to recover it were fruitless. He allied himself with the German Emperor Otto, and he is even said to have asked the Emir of Morocco to assist him; but Philip Augustus was one too many for his enemies. At Bouvines in 1214 he won a decisive victory over the Emperor's troops and

forced even John to give up the game. Bouvines set the seal to the realisation of his life's ambitions. France was now united under his single crown; all or nearly all her provinces wrested from the foreign grip. Of the whole broad strip from the Channel to the Pyrenees, which had been the heritage of Henry II, Aquitaine alone remained to John. Even for this the credit did not lie with him. It was not that the men of this southern province loved England, but that they loved Philip less; and, rather than accept the discipline of so near a neighbour, they preferred the easy service of a more remote and less efficient king. So, for two centuries and over, Aquitaine continued to be England's, a fertile source for her commercial enterprise, and—for her later kings—a useful base in their wars of aggression against France. Thus did John, by his folly rather than his misfortune, earn the name of Lack-land.

Yet, truth to tell, the loss of these French dependencies was in many ways a positive gain to England. It set her free from awkward foreign entanglements: it enabled her rulers to concentrate their whole attention on the domestic problems of English government. And, after all, it is easier for most men to drive a single horse than to drive a pair. King John, however, was an equally bad hand at either. He could no more rule England than he could keep a hold on France, and no sooner had he lost one of his steeds out of the stable than he found the other running away with him. It was not that he lacked the wits to govern. He had all the wits of an ingenious knave; but, just because he was a knave and England knew it, he failed disastrously. Yet at the start he had every advantage on his side. He inherited from his father Henry a strong and efficient system of centralised government. The system was still working when John came to the throne. The barons, despite their murmurings, had swallowed it; but they simply could not swallow John. What they had stood from his father, or even from that fine, careless fellow, his brother Richard, they would not stand from a man whose one consistent habit was to break his word, and whose one idea of government was to extort the utmost penny that he could. Just now, too, taxation was the barons' nightmare. One huge bill they had paid for the Crusades, another for Richard's ransom, and they were sick of paying. To meet the call of John's extravagant expenditure, to say nothing of his escapades in France, was beyond their purse, or, at any rate, beyond the limits of their patience.

All barons, be it remembered, held their estates under feudal tenure from the King. This fact was one which no doubt they themselves would gladly have forgotten, but which the King did not forget; and in one way and another he made his tenants pay dearly for the privilege of owning land. For the right to inherit his estate at all, the baron had to pay the crown what was known as a "Relief"; and a Relief was generally fixed at a substantial sum. It was further his bounden duty, if a royal princess was married, to contribute to her dowry, or, if the King himself were taken captive by his enemies, to

subscribe to the ransom asked. There were other calls besides on the baron's purse, none of which did the baron particularly relish; but of them all much the most frequent and by far the most obnoxious was the War Tax.

Under the early Norman kings, as we have seen, it had been the primary duty of a feudal tenant to furnish a military contingent for the king's wars. If he held large lands, he brought many men, if small lands, few; but in the good old days at any rate, furnish the men he must. This arrangement, however, did not always commend itself to Henry II; and in his reign it had been often made permissible to pay a tax instead of finding men. Under his successors the custom grew more common. The tax or fee was assessed in proportion to the number of the knights which each estate was considered able to provide; and it went by the name of Shield money or Scutage. The advantages of such a plan were obvious: instead of a miscellaneous levy of baronial squadrons, pledged to serve for a term of forty days, but not legally compelled to serve for more, the King was now able out of the proceeds of this tax, to hire a standing mercenary army, bound to see the campaign out to its finish, however lengthy it might be. For their part, too, the barons were not sorry to be quit of this often tiresome duty; and rather than follow the King out to France for a period undefined, many found it preferable to pay the tax. In John's reign, however, the burden grew and grew. As the wars in France were frequent, the calls for scutage were frequent also. John's demands were proportionate to the expenses he incurred, and he fixed the knight's fee at a higher rate than it ever had been before; and, if reluctant barons refused payment, he sent his officers to seize their property in quittance of the debt. Now the barons themselves were more or less indifferent to the King's adventures overseas, and cared not a rap whether John or Philip ruled in Normandy. On more than one occasion they refused point-blank to assist him with either money or men. Though less wild and independent than their fathers had been, they had lost none of the old spirit, and little by little their determination grew to endure the extortions of the King no more. All that was now needed to force the matter to an issue was to find a spokesman and a leader. He arrived in a fashion which was somewhat unexpected and peculiar.

Quarrel with Pope.—A year or two after the fall of the Château Gaillard the old Archbishop of Canterbury had died, and John had nominated to the see a weak creature of his own. This had aroused the opposition of the monks of Canterbury, who were legally entitled to some say in the appointment. They had retaliated by electing their own sub-prior to the position and sending him off to Rome to gain the Pope's approval. The Holy Father, instead of selecting one of these two rival candidates, had boldly rejected both, and had named one Stephen Langton, a Cardinal of English birth. This happy solution John stubbornly and quite unreasonably opposed, and defied the Pope to do his worst. The Pope was roused and took up the challenge and

laid the King and all his people under an Interdict. The people suffered most. The ban of Rome's displeasure fell like a dark cloud over the country. The churches were closed, the bells went unring, mass had to be said in the churchyards, and weddings held in the church porch. The dead were carried out of towns and buried in roadside ditches without prayers or priests or any rites of Church. Yet John remained impenitent; and at the end of a year the Pope issued a further ban of full Excommunication. Still John held out: the Pope waited four years more, then grew impatient. In times when the Church's power was still so vastly strong, it was clear that a monarch whom the Church disowned had thereby forfeited his title to the crown, and a suggestion was now made to Philip Augustus that he should cross the Channel and depose the excommunicated king. Such a threat would have stiffened most men's backs. John had now a case: the nation, which might have hesitated to oppose the Pope, was indubitably ready to resist the King of France; yet, just when popular support seemed for once to be behind him, John wavered, and, like the coward he was, threw up the sponge. Hard and humiliating as were the Pope's conditions, he accepted them *en bloc*. He promised, in the first place, to pay an annual tribute of 10,000 marks (which came, of course, out of his people's pocket). He consented to do a vassal's homage to the Pope as overlord (a humiliation which must have made old Rufus and Henry turn in their very graves). And, lastly, he acknowledged Stephen Langton, the cause of the whole quarrel, as Canterbury's archbishop. Before two years were out, Langton, at the head of a united and determined baronage, was reading John a lesson he was not likely to forget.

Langton Takes the Lead.—For Langton, as it turned out, was just such a leader as the barons had been seeking. He was a man of high courage and large ideas, yet possessing a sober, well-balanced, legal mind. He understood the barons' grievances and saw that they were right. So, when he backed them, the authority of his name and his high office won the entire nation to their cause. In the old days of the early Norman rulers, the King had relied upon the lower orders to help him in keeping the barons down, and, as we have seen, the Fyrd had on more than one occasion saved the throne. Now the balance of parties shifted, and all classes equally were combined against the King. The reason for this change of front lay largely in the barons' own attitude. Under the Conqueror and his sons they had asserted their liberty by claiming the title to misgovern others. Under John they asserted their liberty by disputing the King's title to misgovern them. Instead of now regarding law as a royal encroachment at any cost to be resisted, all they desired was to bring the King himself under the law. The result was that, when they took action, they had justice on their side, and the nation as a whole was behind them.

Magna Charta.—It was in the year of the disastrous battle of Bouvines. John had returned from France discomfited, and, to cover the costs of his campaign, had made a fresh demand for "scutage." The

indignant barons had gathered to Bury St. Edmund's, in the county of Suffolk, ostensibly to worship at St. Edmund's shrine. Once arrived there, however, the pilgrimage had changed into an indignation meeting. Langton had taken the lead and had suggested that the old Charter issued by Henry I at his coronation should be taken as the basis of their claims. Here at least was something definite: the proposal was unanimously approved, and all present swore an oath on the relics of the saint that John should have no peace till that Charter was confirmed. Next spring the barons' forces were mobilised at Stamford, and, when all was ready began to move on London. The moment was critical, but it never came to war. The capital joined the rebels, and John, who had fled on their approach, had no choice but to give way. At Runnymede, an island on the Thames, half-way from Staines to Windsor, "the whole nobility of England met," and on 17th June, 1215, John acceded to the Charter and sealed it with his royal seal. The barons had won a bloodless victory.

"John, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Count of Anjou: to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, barons, justices, foresters, sheriffs, prevosts, serving-men, and all his bailiffs and faithful subjects, greeting," so ran the Great Charter's prelude. Thereafter head by head, in three and sixty clauses, redress was promised to all the barons' grievances, both great and small. Two in particular stand out, "*Scutage*," said Clause Twelve, "*shall not be imposed without the advice of the Common Council of the Realm.*" "*No free man*," said Clause Thirty-nine, "*shall be taken or dispossessed of property save by the lawful judgment of his peers.*" Among the other clauses of the Charter were many points which are perhaps of little interest to ourselves, but which meant a great deal to the men therein concerned: rights of inheritance, protection of timber, regulation of game laws, abolition of river-weirs, standardisation of weights and measures. In all these matters the King's oath bound him, not merely to respect his subjects' privileges, but to act more humbly and more sympathetically in the enforcement of his own. His sovereignty remained, it is true, unlimited and absolute. The King was still the master, not the servant of his folk, and it would be long years yet before the power of the Crown should be tempered by constitutional democracy. Yet in that long and bitter struggle between the people and their King, which was to outlast the Middle Ages, and was to attain its final settlement only with the downfall of the Stuarts, the signing of the Great Charter marks, as it were, the first clear step towards liberty.

But let us make no mistake: so far as its contents go, the Charter was no great novelty. Other kings had been wont to issue Charters at the time of their accession and to promise therein to respect this privilege and that. The very Charter which John himself confirmed was largely based, as we have seen, on that put out by his great-great-grandfather, King Henry I. What appears really new in it was rather the action of the barons than the King. For these men were making for

the first time a stand upon a principle. Selfish, in many ways, their motives doubtless were. Their chief object was to gain protection for themselves rather than for Englishmen at large, and much of the Charter was aimed against that centralised machinery of government which Henry II had managed to enforce. The clause, for instance, which guaranteed a man fair trial by his peers was a protest against the interference of the Royal courts. It meant simply that barons intended to be tried by barons and not by some meddlesome official of the Crown. Such a claim was, in fact, intolerable, and small good could have come to England by such an exemption of one class from the jurisdiction of common law. Yet, notwithstanding this, and, as it were despite themselves, the barons were moving in the right direction. In after years that very clause, whatever its original intention, was a valuable safeguard of individual liberty. And when four centuries later King Charles I imprisoned the Five Knights for refusing a forced loan, it was to this article of the Great Charter that they appealed. So, too, with the clause which forbade the levying of scutage without the consultation and approval of the Common Council of the Realm; at the time it meant little change. The Great Council of barons and bishops had habitually been called by earlier kings, like the Witenagemot in Saxon times. In Rufus's reign, as we have seen, they had their say in the quarrel between King and Church. They claimed a voice, too, in the regulation of the taxes. A king was bound in any case to test his barons' feeling before embarking upon war, and it lay in their power always, if they had the courage, to express their disapproval. Yet the clause had its value. Once the principle was set down in black and white, it became a germ from which might spring, albeit by slow and painful growth, the Parliamentary Government. "No Taxation without Representation" was in later years the watchword of Pym, Hampden and their fellow revolutionaries in their struggle with King Charles. Now the Great Council, it is true, was in no sense a Parliament. The barons represented scarcely anybody but themselves. Yet none the less, in offering an organised resistance to the King's extortions, they gave a salutary check to his arbitrary use of power. Henceforward the wise king must needs consult his subjects' wishes. So the Charter became to later generations a name to conjure with. A precedent had been set, and what these men had done, others, should the need arise, might also do; nor was it to be many years before the need arose.

Meanwhile, having caught King Proteus, the barons' next business was to hold him fast. John's word alone was a slender guarantee of good behaviour, and, as a wise precaution, a committee of twenty-five barons was appointed to keep him in the way that he should go. "Five and twenty over-lords," John called them bitterly, and forthwith turned for aid to his old enemy, the Pope. The Pope, knowing that he could count upon the King's subservience, but not upon the barons', did as he was asked, and (by what right it is difficult to see) declared the Charter null and void. Thus encouraged, John rounded on his persecutors.

Civil war broke out; the barons called for assistance to old Philip's son, Prince Louis. They even offered him the English crown, and before long the Frenchman actually landed in the south. For some months the parties fought, and England was only saved from further humiliation by a lucky accident—the death of John himself. In the autumn of 1216 he had narrowly escaped disaster while crossing an arm of the Wash during low tide. The sea had come in with a rapidity beyond his calculations, and, though he himself had got away, he had been forced to abandon his whole train of baggage to the waves. A few days later, while resting at Newark, he died from excessive indulgence in peaches and new cider—an inglorious ending to an inglorious reign.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLAND FOR THE ENGLISH

England, distracted by civil war and invaded by a foreign prince, was left at John's death in the hands of a Regent who was rising ninety, and of a boy who had just turned nine. The boy was John's son Henry. The Regent, chosen by the Great Council to govern during the boy's minority, was William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke. His task was not an easy one: he found London in the occupation of the French troops, the east and south-eastern counties at Prince Louis' feet, and half the baronage sworn to his support. Yet the old Earl was equal to the task: two vigorous blows, one by land and one by sea, and England saw the last of the invader. The first was dealt by the Earl Marshall himself, who caught a large body of French knights at Lincoln and suffered very few of them to escape. Weakened by this disaster, Louis sat down in London to await fresh troops from France. They never came. Hubert de Burgh and a plucky English fleet were on the watch, and when at length the enemy put out, they were caught and defeated at the mouth of the Thames. This victory was decisive, and Prince Louis threw up the game. Making what terms he could with the Regent, he took his way back to France. "The hand of God," says the pious chronicler, "was not with him."

The country breathed again at its escape, and, what is more, it took to heart the lesson it learnt; what the loss of Normandy had in part already taught it, that England was England and not a mere appendage of French soil. For a century and more, let us remember, Englishmen had been ruled by kings of foreign speech, kings who spent a large portion of their days in France, and who, for all their pretended sympathy, seldom had the true welfare of the English folk at heart. But the national spirit was not dead: on the contrary, it had grown the stronger for its long suppression, and now in the reign of the third Henry it burst out into new life.

We have heard much of late concerning barons, their revolts, their

grievances, their charters. But the barons were after all a class apart, a privileged few, a tiny fraction of the whole community. For the ninety-nine per cent of struggling, toiling, much enduring Englishmen little thought had been taken, still less been done. Well might charters be drawn up and Common Councils gathered to safeguard the rights of the nobility. But where did the humble commoner come in? What benefit to him was the King's promise about "scutage" of the land-owners? Nothing was said about the taxes which he paid. It was all very well for the barons to claim fair trial by their peers, but what redress had he against the violence of royal sheriffs or the injustice of the Manor courts? Hitherto, he felt, the baron's interest had been pushed to the exclusion of all else. But, once the demand for rights and privileges was raised, nothing was more natural than for the humble commoner to claim his modest share. Most assuredly the national spirit of English liberty was not dead. In the towns especially it had made a sturdy growth: there men could talk and act together, and many towns had assumed or purchased from the crown wide privileges concerning trade, taxation and self-government. London in particular had obtained a charter which gave its citizens a strong position against oppressive kings. It had a Mayor and something very like a Corporation, and, what is more, a fine sense of its own importance. The Capital was now a power not by any means to be despised. Much might depend, as John had learnt, on what side the Londoners took; and now in the struggle which was fast approaching they were to play no minor part.

Misrule of Henry III.—If more yet were needed to whet the appetite of the people for freedom and to render control of their own destinies more urgent, it was supplied by the character and behaviour of the boy who had now assumed the crown. Henry III was not altogether bad, like John. The best that could be said of him was that he was well-meaning; the worst, that being a fool he did not know it. Flatterers and schemers could manage him, so that he was like putty in their hands, yet all the time he imagined himself to be their master. His conceit inspired him with an absurd belief in his own political sagacity; it allowed him equally, if things went wrong, to unsay what he had said. To break a promise or repudiate a debt was all the same to Henry, for to his own mind at any rate he was always in the right. And this was the more unfortunate because, on the one principle of which he was most stubbornly convinced, he was supremely in the wrong. He, the ruler of England, distrusted Englishmen. One of his first acts, as soon as ever he had come of age, was to quarrel with those who had England's cause most nearly at their heart. Hubert de Burgh, the hero of the sea fight, had assumed the Regency on the death of the Earl of Pembroke. Honest man as he was, the young King hated, resisted, and thwarted him, once in a fit of passion even called him traitor to his face and drawing a sword would there and then have run him through, had not those present intervened. A year or two later a trumped-up charge of maladministration was brought against

de Burgh; he was condemned, haled off, with his feet tied under the belly of his horse, and taken to London, there to be put in chains. Such treatment of their Chancellor was an insult to the nation, and the nation's true voice spoke out in the saying of a blacksmith charged with the fettering of his feet: "No hands of mine shall touch the man who beat back the French from England."

Henry's Foreign Favourites.—But Henry's folly did not end with his hatred of the English. He had a ludicrous infatuation for the foreigner. He gathered to himself favourites from every part of Europe, and ousted Englishmen from office to make way for them. He married a princess from Provence in Southern France, and welcomed the members of her family along with her. Her uncles were his special friends; one he made an earl, a second Bishop of Hereford, a third Archbishop of Canterbury itself. These fellows soon found fat posts for their undeserving kinsmen, so that England was soon full of the Queen's uncles' poor relations. Trying as all this was, it might still have been endured had not the King's odd preferences run to alien priests. But, as ill luck would have it, Henry was the victim of a crazy superstition. He performed every duty which a superficial piety demanded. To do honour to Edward the Confessor, he pulled down the Abbey at Westminster which Edward had built, and replaced it by the still more noble edifice which stands there today. He loaded Becket's shrine with rich embellishments. Above all he stood in terror of the Pope, and would do anything to please him. At the Holy Father's wish he opened the door to a host of Italian clerics. Rich benefices were found in the English Church for many who never so much as set a foot in England. Those who did were none too well received. The people's patience was nearly at an end, and anti-alien riots actually broke out. In one instance the visit of a Roman Cardinal to Oxford resulted in an ugly brawl. The Cardinal's cook insulted a poor Oxford scholar by throwing in his face "some boiling water drawn from the cauldron where the fat meat was being cooked." At this injury to the poor man, one of the clerks drew a bow, and by an arrow discharged therefrom pierced the body of the cook. On the fall of the dead man, a cry was raised, "hearing which the legate was astounded, and struck with fear, which may overtake even the boldest man, he betook himself up to the tower of the church, clad in his canonical hood, and secured the doors behind him." When darkness put an end to the tumult, he doffed his canonical dress and "quickly mounted his best horse" and made off to the King. The King was all sympathy; he had the rioters clapped into prison; and, when the Cardinal left England, he departed in high favour, taking along with him, as England's offering to the Pope, large quantities of valuable Church plate.

Such gross misgovernment went on for some thirty years. But England, as this and other more serious episodes revealed, was slowly ripening for revolt. It remained to find a leader, and the need brought forth a man. Simon, surnamed de Montfort, and in his father's right the Earl

of Leicester, was oddly enough by birth a Frenchman. He had even been a friend of Henry and had taken the King's sister as his wife. But by and by, as Henry's follies grew, the two had drifted apart, and in Simon's mind the determination formed to take up the national cause against the King. In this course he was encouraged by close and lasting friendship with the greatest Churchman in the land, Grosseteste, the Bishop of Lincoln. Grosseteste hated the King's subservience to the Pope, and openly withstood the inroads made in England by the Pope's Italian friends. He saw, too, with a great and wise man's sympathy, the helpless and wronged condition of the English folk. With these ideas he inspired his friend the Earl. De Montfort was an austere and deeply religious man. He had been to Palestine on a Crusade. He had read and studied much, and he had learnt the art of government as Seneschal of Aquitaine. And now, while the other barons were bent on serving their own selfish ends, and thought merely to restrain the King from misconduct toward themselves, Simon was setting his eyes upon a very different goal. He felt himself a man with a mission. "England for the Englishman" was to be his motto; and to his mind the Englishman meant every rank and station, nobility and commoners, lord and peasant, rich and poor;—nor had he long to wait for his opportunity.

The Barons Master Henry.—The crisis which first drove the barons into action and brought Simon to the fore as a crowning proof of Henry's miserable subservience to the Pope. He had already allowed enormous sums to be wrung from the unwilling English Church for the benefit of Rome; now he proposed to tax the laity as well for the furtherance of a papal project with which England was about as much concerned as the man in the moon. The affair arose in this wise. The Island of Sicily was then, as it so happened, in the hands of a German Emperor whom the Pope regarded as his enemy and whom he was therefore most anxious to expel from such close proximity to Rome. But outside help was needed, and Henry had accordingly been asked to provide an army for the purpose and to subscribe as well the enormous sum of £90,000. Will it be believed that the foolish King, without consulting anyone, agreed? This was too much for the barons, out of whose pockets the subsidy was bound to come. They at once threw down the glove and declared that on one condition and one condition only would they consent to pay a penny. Henry must dismiss at once his alien ministers, and surrender the entire control of the administration to a committee of picked barons. Henry took fright and yielded to the storm. A great council was summoned to Oxford. There the King agreed to the so-called Provisions, and fifteen leading men were forthwith appointed to govern and reform the Realm. Among them was Earl Simon. This was his first step to power.

It was little likely that the Fifteen would be agreed over the problems which confronted them, and it was soon apparent that Simon did not see eye to eye with his colleagues. The other barons, it appeared,

were anxious enough to reform the King; they had not the least desire, however, to reform themselves. Do what he might to get the grievances of the lower orders considered, Simon found that the barons were still purely selfish, still as unwilling as ever to do anything for their own unhappy tenants. Their aim, in short, was simply to substitute a tyranny of Fifteen for the tyranny of one; and their attitude filled de Montfort with so much disgust that he quarrelled with them and left the country for a while. Events soon called him back, however. The King's submission had been no more than a temporary expedient. The royal party (for the King had followers too) were up in arms, and the Earl was perhaps not sorry to plunge into a struggle which, if successful, might enable him to deal with England as he wished to deal. There is little doubt that Simon was ambitious, though ambitious in a noble cause. He meant to set things right; and, in accomplishing his ends, he did not shrink, as we shall see, from taking the supreme power into his hands and making himself the virtual king of England. He was about to take the next and the most momentous step towards his goal.

Simon Supreme.—For now, yet once again, the country became involved in civil war. The promises which Henry gave at Oxford had been torn up. The King, as usual, had gone back upon his word; the Pope, also as usual, had obligingly released him from his oath; and Louis of France, called in to arbitrate between the parties, had given his judgment for the King. Simon saw before him no other course but an appeal to arms. But now, to his infinite disgust, he discovered that the barons were deserting him. Except for a few enthusiasts he stood almost alone. Yet he did not despair. "Though all forsake me," he declared, "I and my four sons will stand for the just cause"; and his courage was rewarded. The just cause found other supporters than the baronage. The towns, where, as we have seen, the spirit of English independence was most strong, were ready now to follow this champion of their liberties. London was with the Earl and he fixed his headquarters there. All the chief commercial centres, especially the seaport towns of Kent and Sussex, rallied to London's lead, and a growing party of lesser knights-gentry was ready to take sides against the selfishness of the barons no less than against the tyranny of the crown. Simon was assured of an army, and of an army, as it turned out, sufficient to defeat the King.

While the Earl's army was gathering, the King, after an excursion into the Midlands, marched on the south coast, aiming at the seaport towns. There Simon followed him. It was on the slopes of the South Downs above Lewes Castle that the fight took place. Simon caught the King's force napping as one morning he descended towards the town over the open turf. His generalship was of no mean order, and, although the raw levies of the Londoners fared badly, Simon's horsemen on the other wing drove back the royalist knights into the marshes of the Ouse. Here they floundered in the mud; many were drowned, the rest dispersed in flight. The Earl's triumph was complete, and among the

prisoners taken were the King himself and his eldest son, Prince Edward.

The victor seemed, for the time being at least, to have England at his feet. For one year Simon was king in all but name. For one year he was able to issue orders with all the authority which the possession of his royal captive's person lent him. For one year (and one year was all too brief) he endeavoured to carry into practice his schemes of reform for the betterment of England. By an agreement made at Lewes a new royal council or committee was to be appointed, of which all members were to be true-born Englishmen. Ministers were in future to be responsible to this council, and not to the King alone. For Simon, ahead as usual of the age in which he lived, seems to have formed the bold conception of a monarchy limited by constitutional government. Above all, the Commons, as well as the nobility, were to be represented in the Great Council of the Realm, which now already was beginning to be called by the name of Parliament. Four knights from every shire and two burgesses from every borough were to join the barons at the board.¹ Thus both townfolk and country-folk were at least to have their spokesmen, and through the mouths of these the Commons might air their grievances. In other and quieter times the scheme might well have worked, and Simon's dreams been fully realised. But those dreams were doomed to disappointment; and almost before his Parliament had met his short year of power was drawing to a close.

The country was in a turmoil. Many barons, as we have seen, had turned against the Earl; many had stayed at home, and now even among his immediate following the more conservative, doubting the wisdom of reducing the King's power to a mere shadow, began to falter. Fresh desertions took place, and amongst others the powerful Earl of Gloucester went over to the royalist cause. Then a great misfortune happened: the more dangerous of the Earl's two prisoners, Prince Edward, effected his escape. He was out riding with his guards; his friends were lying in wait. At a pre-arranged signal he set his horse at a gallop, threw off pursuit, and joined them. Once free, he joined hands with the Earl of Gloucester, rallied his supporters, and the civil war began afresh.

Battle of Evesham.—Simon was on the Welsh side of the Severn at the moment of the Prince's escape, and most unwisely he lingered there so long that the Prince and Gloucester had time to seize the river crossings and pin him, as it were, behind that line. Simon moved first to Newport, but there was no escape that way. Then he marched north to Worcester, but found the ford already held by the Prince, and himself cut off from the Midlands and his friends. His case seemed hopeless, but at this juncture an unexpected chance was given him. It so happened that his son Simon was at Kenilworth, the family seat of the de Montforts. The force with him was small, and its smallness tempted Prince Edward to make a rash diversion against Kenilworth, leaving

¹ The Council itself was of course no innovation, since every King habitually called it. Even the representatives of shires had frequently attended it to do business for their shire, but not, as now *officially as a body*.

the river-line for a short while unguarded. Young de Montfort was caught napping and most of his men slain. But meanwhile, quick as the Prince had been on his marching out to Kenilworth and back to Worcester, the Earl himself had been quicker. He had dropped down the Severn to a few miles below Worcester and had slipped across by Kempsey Ford. The worst of his peril seemed over, and, confident of his escape, he rested that night at Evesham. Little did he dream that even then his enemies were gathering to his encirclement. During the night Mortimer's army was moving from the west, from the northwest Gloucester, and from the north Prince Edward himself. The Earl, had he only known it, was caught in a trap.



FIG. 10.—CAMPAIGN OF EVESHAM.

Next morning he rose early and heard mass. As his men got to horse a report came in that troops were approaching by the northern road. It was believed that they were young de Montfort's men from Kenilworth—indeed, the de Montfort banner had been sighted streaming in their van. The Earl went out to reconnoitre, and great was his dismay when he discovered that these troops were not his son's but the Prince Edward's, the banner a trophy brought from Kenilworth to be used as a *ruse de guerre*. Almost at the same moment the other two columns of Mortimer and Gloucester were sighted further west. The jaws of the trap were closing round him and the Earl recognised his fate. "May God have mercy on our souls," he cried, "for our bodies

are Prince Edward's." But, though the issue of the fight was a foregone conclusion, there was no flinching. The Earl himself fought like a lion in the thickest of the *mêlée*. Engaged by half a dozen enemies at once he was surrounded, but even so his defence was so vigorous and his armour so impenetrable that for long he kept them at bay. At last some one found a slit in the back of his mail shirt, and thrust in a sword. The Earl fell dead. Like their leader, most of his companions went down fighting; very few outlived the day, and even the captive King himself narrowly escaped being cut down in error. "Such was the murder of Evesham, for battle it was none."

For some months after this battle a forlorn hope of Simon's followers held out at Kenilworth and elsewhere, but the cause of the King had triumphed, and the cause of the Earl failed—or so it seemed. Yet the work which Simon had begun survived his fall. The ideals for which he had lived and died were re-born—where least might have been expected—in his chief enemy, Prince Edward. That young man, when he came presently to wear the crown, showed himself as truly English as his father had been un-English. He cared for his people's welfare as no other king before him had ever cared. And, had Simon lived on, he would have seen his own scheme of a representative assembly carried into practice by the first of constitutional kings. The Earl's brave life had not been thrown away. His stand for the rights of the common folk and his championship of the true English cause entitle him to a high place in the country's history. In the years that followed his death they won for him the name and reputation of a martyr, and miracles were even attributed to the magic of his sainthood.

The King himself survived de Montfort seven years. His death was no loss, and the sooner he made way for a wiser man, the better. There could be little peace for the country while such a man was on the throne; and even while he lay a-dying, the citizens of London were still howling their grievances outside his palace windows. He had ruled according to his folly, and it was with a touch of ironic justice that Dante, in his description of the Souls in Purgatory, placed him among the children and half-witted. Yet out of his folly there came this much of good, that he drove Englishmen by sheer misgovernment to a defence of their own rights, and thus hastened the coming of a constitutional government under his son. Four hundred years later another monarch drove the Englishmen's descendants, by a similar ineptitude, to complete and, as it were, set a cap on the same constitutional development. It was something surely beyond a mere coincidence which ordained that in both reign and character there should exist so striking a resemblance between Henry Plantagenet and Charles Stuart.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MAKING OF PARLIAMENT AND THE UNITING OF
BRITAIN

On Henry's death Edward received the kingdom from his father; but his policy he took from his dead enemy the Earl. He had learnt during those years of struggle the all-important lesson that England can best be governed only by gaining the confidence of Englishmen, and throughout his long reign he endeavoured himself to practice the principles which Simon preached. His work was slow but thorough: many experiments were made, and it was not till he had been for three and twenty years upon the throne that his idea of what Parliament should be took on a permanent and settled shape. The assembly which he then summoned has come, and with good reason, to be called the Model Parliament; for not only was it the model which Edward's own successors followed, but it is the model upon which, in the main, is based the Parliament that sits at Westminster to-day.

Meeting of Parliament.—It was in the autumn of the year 1294 that Edward laid his plans for this assembly. He was on the brink of war with Philip of France; insurrection had broken out in Wales, and the Scots were giving trouble in the north. It was essential to the maintenance of the King's armies that he should raise a substantial tax, and, true to his principle that "in what concerneth all, all should be consulted," Edward determined that a full Parliament must meet to vote that tax. So out go the writs of summons: one to the leading men of the baronial class, another to the bishop of each diocese, enjoining him, "by the faith and love which bind him to the crown, to be present at Westminster in person on the Sunday after Martinmas this coming winter," and further to bring with him delegates chosen from his cathedral chapter and from the lesser clergy of his see. A third writ (in our eyes, though perhaps not in Edward's, the most important of them all) goes to the sheriff of each county bidding him "cause to be elected two citizens from every city, two burghers from each borough, and two knights out of the shire, discreet men and ready to take pains, and to make them to appear before the king at the aforesaid time and place."¹ This summons when it comes to the ears of the elected, comes, it must be confessed, with any but a welcome sound. Everybody knows that, if the King calls Parliament, it can only mean one thing: it is money he is after, not advice; and, as nobody likes paying taxes, however politely or constitutionally asked, nobody is anxious either to go to Westminster and vote them. Members would gladly have shirked the tiresome duty, if they could; and it is even recorded that once the pair

¹ A king could summon Parliament where he liked, and it was often held elsewhere than at Westminster.

selected out of Oxfordshire were so aghast at the responsibility thus thrust upon them that they actually decamped and were never seen again.

Edward's royal palace named in the writ is conveniently placed near the walls of London city, but not inside of them.¹ It stands upon Thames banks hard by the great Abbey of Westminster, and on the very site where five centuries later the Houses of Parliament were one day to be built. It is, therefore, upon historic ground that the Model Parliament collects this Sunday after Martinmas in the year of grace 1295. Bishops and Clergy, Lords and Commons, they are a large and motley throng; but the Hall of the Palace is spacious enough to accommodate all of them; and each of the three estates has its allotted station in the Hall. Judges sit on four woolsacks, ranged in a ring before the throne. To the right and left are benches. On the benches to the left sit the nobility, men of high-born families with resounding names, splendid in all the pride of heraldic quarterings and military accoutrements. On the benches to the right sit the spiritual peers, archbishops, bishops, priors and abbots, in the long sweeping robes of their office, brilliant with gems and delicate embroideries. Beyond these groups, and filling the further body of the Hall, are the Commons' representatives, members from city, shire, and borough, together with the delegates of the lesser clergy: shy awkward fellows for the most part, fish out of water among such noble company. Their dress is homely, and their names are as homely as their dress; yet names such as Roger the Draper, Andrew the Piper, John the Taverner, Durant the Cordwainer, Citizen Richard, and William the priest's son have at least a true English ring about them; but, as a mark of reverence, befitting their low degree, the Commons stand, while the Peers and the Sovereign sit.

Parliament and Laws.—The proceedings of the Parliament are formal. The King addresses the gathering in Norman-French, explains his policy, dwells on the dangerous ambitions of the king of France, states his financial needs. The Chancellor follows with some pompous legal Latin; and it then remains for the members to consider what answer they shall give. Now, instead of voting money in one general grant, it is a point of privilege with the three estates of Clergy, Lords and Commons, that each should have the right of fixing its own taxation independently. At this point, therefore, Parliament splits up into three groups for separate consultation. The Lords are accommodated in some other chamber of the Palace. The Commons, who are not so privileged, must either make what shift they can in the general hall or may be they will repair (as in a few years' time they quite certainly do) to the neighbouring Abbey of Westminster, where, by the courtesy of the monks, they are allowed the use of the Refectory or Chapter House for

¹ The "City" then corresponded roughly to the area of London which still goes by that name. Of the old Westminster Palace itself nothing now remains except the great Hall (rebuilt by Richard II in 1397) which is an adjunct of the present House of Parliament built in 1840.

their deliberations. It means much to the Commons that in those early days of stress and insecurity they can find a safe shelter behind these friendly walls. In what place the clergy meet concerns us less. For a very few years will see them meeting no more at Westminster, but cutting themselves altogether adrift from the rest of Parliament. The Bishops and Abbots, it is true, continue to sit among the Peers, even dominating that assembly, and until the Reformation outnumbering the lay barons; but the main body of the clergy's delegates prefer to shift their rendezvous to Canterbury and York, where they hold what they call their Convocation in separate privacy. This is undoubtedly their loss. Convocation is not Parliament. Problems of Church policy and Church government may be discussed conveniently enough at Canterbury and York (where they are still discussed by "Convocation," even to the present day); but, with this severance of the clergy from the rest of Parliament, all share in national policy and national government ceases to be theirs. These are left henceforward to the Commons and the Lords; and thus almost from the start the power which is first to challenge, and finally to supersede the authority of the Crown, is representative not of all three Estates, but of two alone.

In 1295, however, the year of which we are now speaking, the clergy were still there, and they returned with the rest to the Palace Hall when private consultations were completed, and each estate had separately resolved what answer should be given to the King. In the name of the class for which they stood, each proceeded now to authorise the raising of a tax. The Commons offered one-seventh of their income, and the Lords one-eleventh: with the clergy's offer of one-tenth, Edward was disappointed. But, though he had hoped for more, yet he had no small ground for satisfaction with his Model Parliament. As a machine for voting taxes it had been distinctly a success. That he was presently to find it something more than a machine, and something which would upset his easy calculations, is not for ourselves so difficult to see.

For soon enough it was discovered that even at Westminster the tables might be turned against the King, and that Parliament might one day ask as well as give. Nothing in fact, was simpler than to drive a bargain with His Majesty; or to make consideration of their wrongs and grievances a preliminary condition of their vote. Redress first, and taxes afterwards became the frequent cry and the normal method of Parliament's procedure.¹ And, if the King refused to do what Parliament required of him, then the money he required of them was not forthcoming. Thus, when two years after the meeting of the Model Parliament, Edward was asking for funds again, he was firmly and politely told to renew all charter promises of previous kings; and, sure enough, he did as he was told. Again, in 1301, there came the opportunity for an even bolder claim. The Scottish war was going none too

¹ It is, however, only fair to Edward to say that he was genuinely anxious to be acquainted with grievances, and did at times summon Parliament for consultation rather than taxation.



YORK MINSTER

Lower Windows in Decorated Style
Tower Windows in Perpendicular

well; money was wanted to continue the campaign; and in due course Edward called a Parliament at Lincoln. No sooner was it met, than a certain Henry of Keighley, shire-knight for Lancashire, demanded an alteration in the Forest laws. We may guess that he was acting as spokesman or "Speaker"¹ of the Commons; and certainly he had an excellent case. The royal pleasure parks, so unpopular in Rufus' reign, were still unpopular. The foresters or gamekeepers were the petty tyrants of the country-side; the peasants were at their mercy; the barons were plagued with manifold restrictions and resented the encroachments on their own estates. All classes were agreed against the nuisance; but, though the King had often promised an enquiry, nothing had been done. When, therefore, the bold demand was made that, not merely should the rigour of the game-laws be abated, but part of the royal forest land should be abandoned by the Crown, it received a vigorous backing. Stormy scenes ensued. Edward was furious, and Henry of Keighley was thrown into prison for his pains. None the less, Parliament stuck to its guns, and, after ten days of argument, Edward was forced to yield. He undertook, upon his royal honour, to revise the Forest laws. Then, but not till then, did he get the vote of money that he asked. The importance of this deal is obvious. Parliament was no longer a mere machine for voting the King taxes: it had become an instrument for extracting necessary reforms and of getting new laws made.

But even with such a triumph Parliament was not content: once having tasted power, it very naturally reached out for more, and eventually aspired to making new laws. This step was not taken, in point of fact, under Edward I, but within a century the change had come, and we shall find Parliament no longer approaching the throne with a mere tale of grievances and a humble petition for redress, nor satisfied to leave the further task of legislation with the King. Instead of that they undertook themselves to decide what measures should be taken. They frame, in full particulars, a document which they are pleased to call a Bill. That Bill, when the summons comes and a request is made for taxes, they then present for the royal consideration. It remains for the King to signify approval, and, when once the usher of the House has pronounced the magic words, "*Le Roy le veult*," that Bill becomes an Act with the full authority of law. No more far-reaching step can be imagined; and it is plain that Parliament is well upon the way to becoming the real power behind the throne. English institutions change but slowly, and the methods devised under the Plantagenets still stand to-day. Before a new law can now be made, the Government still drafts its Bill, still sends it when approved by Parliament for His Majesty's assent, and still the assent is given by the same old-fashioned formula

¹ The "Speaker," now of course simply the "Chairman" of the House of Commons, seems originally to have been in a true sense the "speaker" or the mouth-piece; the other members not being worthy to address the King directly.

in Norman-French, "*Le Roy le veult*"—His Majesty is so resolved. "*Between the two voices six centuries lie.*"¹

II

Edward I and Wales.—If Edward had done nothing more than launch England's parliamentary institutions on their course, he would yet rank among the greatest of English kings. But this was only one among his many services. The man who thus in a single council had united all classes of his realm, held also in his brain the scheme for a larger union, whereby the divided countries of England, Wales, and Scotland might be merged and welded under his single crown. It was Edward's dream to be the founder of "*Great Britain*," and, though he did not in all respects succeed, it was not for want of trying.

The tribes of the Welsh hills were descendants of those ancient British fugitives who in far-off days had taken refuge there before the

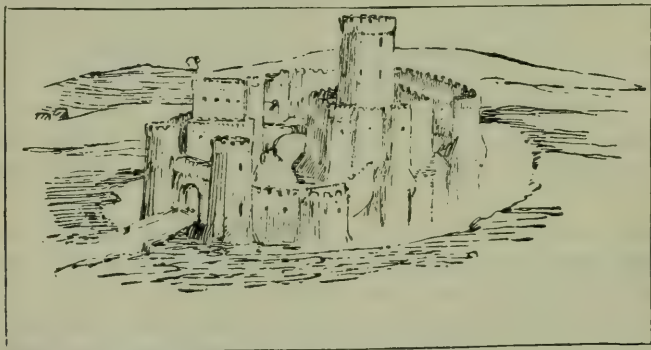


FIG. 11.—BUILTH CASTLE, RECONSTRUCTED. BUILT BY EDWARD I.

invading Saxon hordes. There among the mountains their Roman culture had been largely lost; and they were now, and had been for centuries, a rough, wild folk, accustomed (as one writer of the period tells us) "*to bere fewe clothes in wynter, thoughe winde blawe ryghte coldely; and to slepe despisinge shetes; withowte hoodes, coates, or tabards, bare on the legges; figtinge with short speres,*" and skilful (we may add) with the long bow; using "*woodes as towres, and marshes for places of defence*"; musical then as always, ready to welcome the minstrel harpist at their feasts; ignorant and superstitious, telling strange tales of witches who could turn themselves at will into the shape of hares. Chieftains of the old-fashioned sort ruled over these tribes; but the Marcher earls established on the Severn border by the Conqueror had long since overrun their country to the south; and only in the north-west among the mountain valleys of Merioneth and Carnarvon did the Welsh chiefs retain a semblance of their one-time independence. The

¹If the King intends to withhold his royal assent (which nowadays he never in practice does), "*Le Roy s'avisera*" is then the formula employed.

last of these, Llewellyn by name, had for some time been a thorn in Edward's side. He had taken a share in the de Montfort rising, and now he even planned a marriage with the dead earl's daughter, and harboured the project of complete liberation from English influence. Edward, dreaming of conquest, was not slow to avail himself of this excuse for war. He hunted Llewellyn into the hill country of Snowdon, then brought up a fleet of ships to blockade the seaboard, and starved the Welshmen out.

Conquest and Revolt.—But Edward was not content with victory alone; he intended to hold the conquered people down, and this in two different ways. First he built castles at important points, such as Conway and Carnarvon and elsewhere; very formidable strongholds they were too, for the builder's art had progressed much since Richard's day, and not even the Château Gaillard itself was so scientifically planned as those "Edwardian" castles. Broad moats surrounded them; the outer walls were flanked by massive corner towers, circular in shape, and thus offering no vulnerable angle to battering-ram or sapper's pick.¹ Such towers, moreover, projecting outward from the walls, enabled the defenders to enfilade the party of attack; and, even should these main defences anywhere be breached, there still remained two other wards, concentrically contained, ring within ring, the inner not to be approached till the outer had been carried. The very presence of such castles was enough to cow the Welsh; to capture them was utterly beyond their power.

Edward's other measure had less success. In order to daunt the high spirit of these mountaineers, he ordered the establishment of English law in Wales. It was an ill-judged policy, typical of Edward's somewhat harsh, unsympathetic temper; and there is little wonder that the tribesmen soon rebelled. Llewellyn and his brother David took up arms. Of course, they failed. Llewellyn was killed in battle and his head, severed from the body, was sent to decorate the battlements of London Tower. David, his brother, was taken prisoner; and, since there was no mercy now for those who took arms against the King, he was duly hung, drawn, and quartered as a traitor, and the different parts of his body were distributed among the more important cities of the realm.

With that the Welshmen's independence disappeared for ever. They lost little of their spirit and none of their hatred for English ways and English speech, clinging (as they still do in some parts) to their own Celtic tongue. But they were under the conqueror's heel: Edward could use them as he would. Yet, wishing if possible to win their loyalty, he made at least a show of appealing to their native pride. He offered them a prince, a member of the royal house who (so he said—it is the one grim joke recorded of him) "could speak or understand no word of English." It was his infant first-born son who thus became the head of that long line of royal heirs who have borne through six

¹ C/p Plate III, opp. page 50.

centuries the honourable title of "Prince of Wales." In what light the Welsh themselves regarded the honour is not so clear; but meanwhile King Edward had other fish to fry, for he was already at war with the Scots.

III

Scottish History and Character.—Few peoples have had a more chequered or romantic history than the Scots. Little as we know of the dark and early years when the nation was coming to its birth, we know that they were years of ceaseless struggle. First, the Scottish pirates, crossing from the Irish coast, had gained a footing on the west, fought, made friends, and finally (in Alfred's time) united with the Pictish tribes who were already in possession. In this way there was formed a purely Celtic kingdom in the Highlands of the north, but no sooner was it formed than quarrels began with its lowland neighbours across the Firth of Forth. Of these, the Strathclyde Britons soon went under; but the eastern coast, held by a stouter stock of Angle and Danish settlers, was less quickly won. For over a century they were claimed as subjects of the Saxon throne, but at last, in the reign of Edgar, this claim had been abandoned, and the Lowlands definitely passed into the hands of the Scottish king. The result was strange, for the Lowlanders were not absorbed into the Celtic race. On the contrary, their Saxon language spread, and, except in the Western Highlands (where the Gaelic speech even now still lingers on), it eventually prevailed. Eventually, too, the Anglo-Saxon element, aided by Norman settlers, got the better of the Highland Celts. David, the enemy of Stephen, half Norman baron and half Lowland king, succeeded in extending his authority over the whole country north of Tweed. Thus there arose a united Scottish kingdom, ruled by one king, feeling itself one nation, and not destined to merge its fortunes with the rival country until the last monarch of its royal line became James the First of England.

The people, compounded of such various blood, were a vigorous and stalwart race, handsome and big in body, spare in diet, hardened by the bleak weather of their wind-swept moors, ill neighbours, lovers of the foray, and, as they since have proved on many fields, the finest fighting stock in the whole world. The spirit of the clan, which bound them by close ties to the support of their own kindred and the customs of their sires, made them in many respects the most independent and conservative of men. But the same spirit which gave them their fierce love of freedom, and which (as Edward was to learn) brooked "nyghe as well death as thraldome," sowed also among them the seed of bitter feuds and shattering disunion. Scots are nothing if not loyal. Whole-hearted devotion to their chosen leaders, whether that leader were a Bruce or a Prince Charlie, has surrounded their national history with a glamour of romance. But, loyal as they are by nature, their loyalty has too often been to clan or party when wider issues were at stake and when it was

of supreme importance to unite. Scotland has always been more or less a house divided. It was this fatal weakness in its people's character which led some of them in Edward's reign to appeal for English help against their countrymen; and it was this which gave the English king the very opportunity he sought.

Edward had hoped indeed to gain his ends by other means than conquest. These were days when early marriages between royal heirs played a great part in the diplomacy of kings. A young princess from Norway had recently been offered the vacant Scottish throne, and Edward had succeeded in arranging a betrothal between this girl and his infant son, the Prince of Wales. But even the best-laid schemes, as the Scots proverb says, "gang aft agley." The passage over the sea



FIG. 12.—SCOTTISH WARS.

from Norway was more than the young girl's health could stand, and no sooner had she reached her destination than she died. But Edward's resources were not by any means exhausted: the Scottish throne now being in dispute, he offered his services in deciding between rival claims. Nine candidates came forward, and from these he selected one, John Balliol, a distant descendant of the old royal line of Scotland. Balliol was accepted by his countrymen; he was duly crowned at Scone; but before long he had a sharp reminder that, so far from being his own master, he was Edward's nominee. Like many English kings before him, Edward claimed to be the overlord of Scotland: the circumstances of the new king's appointment made it doubly easy to uphold that claim, and Edward now deliberately encouraged Balliol's Scottish subjects to appeal against Balliol to himself. Some, as we have hinted, were only

too ready to take advantage of this chance; among them the Earl of Fife. Edward interfered with equal readiness, and summoned Balliol as a vassal-prince to answer at his court. Whether or no he was justified in this is doubtful; but it was a challenge to Scotland. Feeble creature as John Balliol was, his people's pride would not allow him thus to dance attendance on the English sovereign, and the Scotch barons impatiently declared for war. They caught Edward at an awkward moment when he was engaged in a struggle with the French. In 1295, the year of the Model Parliament, they entered upon an alliance with his enemies. Edward behaved with resolution: he cut short his campaign in France, led an army against the Scots, carried their strongholds, beat their army, deposed Balliol, and took the kingdom for himself; even the Holy Stone of Scone, reputed to be the self-same piece of rock on which Jacob's head had rested when he dreamed his dream of angels, he carried off to London as a trophy. The victory was sweeping, the collapse complete. All now seemed over, and the play played out. Yet in reality the curtain was but just about to rise upon a drama of national resistance among the most desperate and heroic in all history.

Edward and Wallace.—Truth to tell, Balliol was no genuine patriot leader, and the men who fought and failed with him were chiefly barons of English birth. But presently there arose a man fit to rally the true backbone of the nation, the crofters and the peasants, to the defence of the country's cause. In William Wallace Scotland found her soul; and from the bitter lesson of defeat she learnt to set a true value upon freedom. The first taste, indeed, of English tyranny had been more than enough. In 1297 Wallace gathered a band of malcontents about him, and offered battle to the English in the neighbourhood of Stirling, a town where a castle guarded the passage from the Lowlands to the north. Treating his challenge with most ill-timed contempt, the English crossed the river by a narrow bridge, and thus allowed their forces to be caught divided. They were very bloodily defeated. One of Edward's principal officials was among the slain: his corpse was flayed, and pieces of the skin were distributed among the rebels to be used as belts. Edward was thoroughly aroused. It was war to the knife now, and, though neither Wallace nor the Scots were in any mood for drawing back, the tide of their success soon turned. A large English army, over thirty thousand¹ strong, was soon marching for the north. Wallace retired towards Stirling, burning the country as he went; the English came up with him at Falkirk, scattered his army, hunted him into the hills, and, after seven years of hue and cry, succeeded through foul play in making him their prisoner. His punishment was typical of the times. "He was led through the streets of London dragged at the tail of a horse, and dragged to a very high gallows where he was hanged by a halter, then taken down half dead, after which his body was divided into four quarters, and his head fixed on a stake and set on London Bridge. His

¹ The numbers given by mediæval chroniclers are open to gravest suspicion of exaggeration, and may safely, as a rule, be divided by two.

four quarters, thus divided, were sent to the four quarters of Scotland." For Scotland herself this was perhaps the darkest hour; with the loss of her leader, her last hope of liberty was threatened with extinction, and once again all chance of recovery seemed lost. It was not so. Within two years a blow was struck by the hand of a greater than Wallace, and in that blow, bloody and lawless as it was, men recognised that the free Scottish spirit still lived on.

Rise of Bruce.—Of the nine candidates who had sued before Edward for the Scottish throne, Balliol was now an exile; but his nephew, John Comyn, known as the Red Comyn, was acting regent for the English king. Chief of the other claimants had been a Bruce; and even now his grandson, Robert, had not by any means relinquished the family claim upon the crown. Robert Bruce loved England little, but he loved the Scottish friends of England less. He was resolved that, if liberty was at all to be regained, the Red Comyn must alter his policy or die. The two met by pre-arrangement in the Grey Friar's Chapel at Dumfries. What passed between them is not known. But, when Bruce came out from the church, he came alone. "I doubt I have slain the Red Comyn," he said to his friends. "We'll mak' sicker," answered one, and the better to "make sure" he entered the church door to dispatch the dying man. With this cruel and treacherous deed, Robert Bruce began his championship of Scotland.

Bruce did not hesitate to act: he hurried to Scone, there to be crowned King; but he began his reign as an outlaw and a fugitive. Not a moment's rest was given him: he was hunted by bloodhounds, and escaped them only by walking through a stream and so throwing his pursuers off the scent. At one time he was forced to take refuge on an island off the Irish coast; and, when he crossed again to the Scottish mainland, the English were again upon his track. But, like the spider of the legend, from whose pertinacity, as we are told, he drew a lesson for himself, Bruce struggled on; and his pluck had at the last its due reward. In 1307, while leading an army into Scotland, his chief enemy, the King of England, died. The tough old campaigner had outworn his strength. He knew it; and, feeling that his life was ebbing and wishing that the inspiration of his presence should go with the army which he could never lead to victory, Edward made a strange provision for the disposition of his corpse. He ordered that it "should be boiled in a cauldron till the flesh parted from the bones, and that then the bones should be wrapt up in a bull's hide and carried at the head of the host." Not thus, however, could a portion of the old man's spirit descend upon his son. Edward II was a feeble king and a poor fighter, and with the passing of the "Hammer of the Scots" (as men had called his father) luck turned against the English, and slowly but surely Robert Bruce came by his own.

With much secret aid from the French, the Scots began to forge ahead, and, one by one, through exploits of marvellous daring, they won their chief strongholds back. A party of thirty scaled the rock of

Edinburgh Castle, using ladders on a starless night. The men of the Black Douglas, with black cloaks over their armour, seized Roxburgh Hold while the garrison was drunk. In Stirling alone the English held out, and, when in 1314 Edward II marched northward to relieve it, Bruce moved down to meet him with a force which was now no longer insignificant. He posted it, not many miles south of the city, behind the marshy bottom of the Bannock Burn—a strong position, which he further fortified with “pottes,” shallow pits, that is, filled with sharp stakes and covered up with brushwood. In point of numbers, the Scots were indeed outmatched by three to one; but, thanks to bad handling and the narrow front, the English superiority was wasted, and when their first line, plunging in the marsh and spiked upon the stakes, succeeded in making contact with the enemy, the result was a deadlock. Fiercely as they fought, the van could not advance, but retire they would not, or give the reserves their chance. The archers could not use their bows by reason of the press, or, if they did, they ran a risk of wounding friend as well as foe. The reserves, counting nearly half the host, stood idle and helpless in the bog. In such a situation men are easily scared; and when some Scottish camp followers burst out of a wood upon their flank, waving a tartan to counterfeit a standard, shouting and blowing horns, the English mistook this crude diversion for a fresh attack. The rear faltered and fled, and before long the entire host was streaming back to England in a desperate rout. No English army ever suffered a bloodier defeat, and it set the final seal on Edward’s failure. The Scots, crossing the border “to plunder and to ravish,” put terror and despair into his heart. Peace was made. Scotland was freed, and Robert Bruce reigned at Edinburgh as her undisputed King.

Weakness of Edward II.—In no small degree the English failure in Scotland was due to disaffection and turbulence at home. Barons would still be barons, if they got the chance; and even Edward I himself had found it difficult to curb them. Once, when having resolved to lead an expedition against France, he told them they must either go with him or hang, they had answered defiantly they would do neither, nor in point of fact did they. Where the father had failed, the son was little likely to succeed; and under that futile fop, the second Edward, the barons’ self-assertion grew apace. They took the government altogether out of the King’s hands and entrusted it to a council which they called the Lords Ordainers. They made a dead set at his various favourites, notably at the vain and worthless Earl, Piers Gaveston. Three times this man was exiled by the barons, and three times the fond King brought him back. On his third and final reappearance he was openly attacked, made a prisoner, and beheaded. Edward was helpless: once, indeed, he rounded on his enemies and got rid of his ambitious uncle, Thomas of Lancaster. But this show of spirit did not last, and it was not long before he himself suffered a similar fate. He was driven west in ignominious flight, caught, formally deposed, and (with the connivance of his faithless queen) informally despatched

in the keep of Berkeley Castle in 1327. His death was no loss to England. He had dragged the name of the Plantagenets down into the dust. It was only redeemed by the boyish heir who now succeeded him, and who was destined to raise it once again to a high pinnacle of glory. The next thirty years were splendid with the pomp and chivalry of the third Edward's foreign wars; and, just as the coming triumphs over France were to give England a new sense of her own greatness and a new pride in the prowess of her King, so equally they were to banish (if only for a season) the mean jealousies and fruitless quarrels of his father's reign.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ENGLISH ARMY IN FRANCE

I

Across the waters of the Channel, where English interests were still great and were yearly growing greater, there stood a more powerful and more worthy foe than either Scots or Welsh. France, since Philip Augustus had united her and made her a nation, had gone from strength to strength. She was now at the zenith of her fortunes, her towns and merchants prosperous, her knights the flower of chivalry, her name and influence in Europe second to none. She and England were, of course, old rivals, and there had seldom been peace between them long; but with this rapid growth of power on either hand there came a new clash of interests and ambitions; and the long-drawn tedious feud broke suddenly into a fierce decisive struggle, a struggle which was to settle the quarrel of two centuries by a century of fighting. Since Hastings the Conqueror's successors had never wholly lost their Continental heritage; and the English king had always ruled with one foot, as it were, upon French soil. The Hundred Years' War was now to determine, not whether he should maintain that footing, but whether he should win all France or lose it all.

Causes of French War.—The causes of the clash were various. Philip VI, the ruling King of France, had wide ambitions, and at more points than one he was already treading on England's toes. Like most of his predecessors, he was planning to drive her out of Aquitaine, where, despite John's loss of Normandy and the northern provinces, she still held on. Northward, too, over Flanders, Philip's power was spreading, so that its Count was already his vassal, and its towns, though more independent, were slowly being drawn into the toils. To England, Flanders meant even more than did Aquitaine itself, for the Flemings bought and wove the wool which was grown on English sheep-farms. For English traders, therefore, no less than for the citizens of Ghent and Bruges, it was vital that the ports should be kept open to our shipping and the market remain free of any interference from the King

of France. Flanders then was a second point where English interests were seriously endangered. Last, and of all perhaps most galling to English pride, King Philip (in this, too, following his predecessors) had a large finger in the Scottish pie. Edward I had failed to conquer Bruce, chiefly owing to the assistance which he got from France; and now, when Bruce had died and his countrymen (badly out-fought by Edward's grandson at the battle of Halidon Hill) were forced to accept a second Balliol on the throne, it was King Philip who gave harbourage to Bruce's son and helped him to return and drive the usurper out. Here again, then, England had a long score to wipe out against the French; all the more since it was becoming evident that with this powerful foreign backing the rebellious north could never permanently be quelled and that the real key to the conquest of Scotland lay on the battlefields of France.

Thus in Aquitaine, in Flanders, and on her own Scottish border, England could not be blind to the French challenge. The gage had been thrown down; the lists were ready for the tournament of the nations; and it only needed that a champion should appear upon the English side and take the challenge up. No fitter champion could have been found than in the person of the third Edward. He was young (his age was but four and twenty when in 1337 the first blows were struck in France), and he had all the strength and recklessness of his years. He was a born fighter and commander, if not a skilful strategist; and, although there was nothing he would not sacrifice to his own selfish ambitions, no expense he would not lavish upon his personal extravagance, yet the glamour of his victories was soon to make of him the nation's hero; he was hailed as the type of chivalry and the model of what an English king should be. Edward was not one who did anything by halves; and it was like the impetuous and headstrong youth to have startled France, and no doubt England too, with a claim without precedent in history. He, the King of England, claimed also to be rightful King of France. The facts (since there was some shadow of right upon his side) were these. This Philip of whom we have been speaking, and who in 1328 had succeeded to the old King Charles IV, was not actually Charles's nearest living relative. He was only a first cousin, and the awkward point was this, that Charles's sister (his brothers, like himself, had all died heirless) had been married to the late King of England, and her son was none other than Edward III himself. A nephew's claim is stronger than a cousin's, and Edward might perhaps have become King of France had he not happened already to be King of England too. This was a fatal bar in the eyes of the French themselves, and, searching about for some argument to use against him, they raked up the ancient Salic Law, which forbade inheritance through female blood, and they denied that he could claim a single rood of France in his mother's right. But, legal or illegal, Edward was resolved, when strong enough, to push this claim of his by force of arms. In 1346 he was ready, and, boldly quartering his royal arms with the white lilies

of France, he landed on the Norman coast with an army some thirty thousand strong.

Character of the Army.—No army ever won more stirring victory or brought more credit to England than did Edward's host. Its feats were so brilliant and the part it played in history so momentous, that, before relating what it did, we may well pause to consider how it was raised, equipped, and trained.

In part at least this army of Edward's may be said to have been a "conscript" army. Men were called to the colours town by town and shire by shire; their names taken from the roll of citizens. But the Commissioners of Array (as the recruiting officers were called) were able to select the best and fittest, and many of the chosen were doubtless glad enough to go for soldiers. Besides the prospect of travel and adventure, good pay was offered them,¹ 3d. a day for archers, which was the equivalent of an ordinary labourer's wage, 6d. a day for horse archers, which was as much as even a skilled workman got. Some, who did not hanker for the delights of battle, paid substitutes to take their place: the rest of the money was found out of the taxes voted to the King. Along with these honest English yokels, Tom, Dick and Harry from the farmyard and the workshop, was a large admixture of volunteers or hired professional soldiers. Contingents of these were raised by individual barons or free-lance captains under contract with the King, who paid them so much money down for the force they brought into the field. More and more, as the campaigns dragged on, Edward relied on this method of recruiting, and in the later stages of the war, these Free Companies of mercenary soldiers became something of a problem, hiring out their services as best might suit them, and making the war an opportunity for plunder and rapine. Last, we must not forget the nobility itself, princes, barons, even bishops of the Church, knights, all of them fighting in full mail, who in time past had been the decisive factor in every battlefield, and who were still in a sense the core of every army. Yet, for all their prowess and importance, the days were gone when this aristocracy did the whole business of fighting the King's battles, leaving the humbler folk to tend the sheep and speed the plough at home. Edward's army was no mere retinue of feudal lordlings, trained in the pomp and etiquette of chivalry. It was a national host: each hamlet and each borough contributed its men. Archery practice upon village greens did more than any tournament to pave its way towards victory; and the credit and pride of its success sent a thrill through the whole nation, such as never previously had been felt when a Richard or a Henry was winning his personal triumphs with a lordly company of earls and barons at his back.

Armour.—Concerning the armour and weapons of these men, it is worth while here to say a word, if for no other reason, because the opening of the Hundred Years' War witnessed a new development of great importance. Since Hastings, armour, like tactics, had changed

¹ But not always received.

but little, and for nearly three centuries every knight had ridden into battle clad in complete mail, whether fashioned of interwoven links or of small metal discs strung close together.¹ His equipment was as follows: body shirt and breeches, both of mail, with a mail cap or coif for head and neck; knee-caps and elbow pieces of stiff leather, boiled and moulded into shape; under the mail thick padded garments to



Time of De Montfort, showing Mail Shirt and Hose; and Leather Knee-caps, with Surcoat of Linen: Shield: and Helm behind head, attached to waist by chain.

Time of Black Prince, showing Mail Neckpiece: Mail Shirt under Plate Cuirass and Leather Jupon with Plate covering to Arms and Legs: Dagger for dispatch of foe.

Time of Henry V, showing complete Plate armour: often (as here) with Mail Shirt beneath: but no over-garment: Crested Helm henceforward used in Tilting only, not in Battle.

FIG. 13.

From Ashdown's *British and Foreign Arms and Armour* (T. C. & E. C. Jack).

break the blow, which else might have dealt grievous bruises through the yielding surface of the mail; and over all a linen surcoat reaching below the knee, and first, perhaps, adopted in the Holy Land to keep

¹ This type, known as banded mail, is often shown on monumental brasses of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The discs, strung on a narrow string of leather, seem to have lain flat side by side, each overlapping the disc next it. Probably these strings of discs were sewn lightly on to some leather garment underneath. In early Norman times, too, a species of scaled armour seems to have been worn.

the sun's rays off the metal. The knight carried a large sword and a small shield, but he was first and foremost a lancer, and the tilting match was not merely a pastime but an exercise for battle. In the field or at the lists he wore over his head a cumbrous metal helm, either tapered to a peak or (in later years) flat-topped like an inverted jar. This so far enveloped his head that he could view the battle only through a narrow slit in front, and was thus greatly at the mercy of attacks from flank or rear. On the helm he wore a crest or emblem, much needed in actual battle to distinguish knight from knight and friend from foe.

Such was the military equipment of the knights who fought in the Crusades and in the civil wars of Henry III. With the first half of the fourteenth century, however, a change crept in. As the armourer's craft progressed, it became possible to forge metal plates, which, without adding intolerably to the armour's weight, replaced the knee-joints and elbow-caps of moulded leather. From this beginning plate armour was gradually introduced, until, by the middle of the century, at the height of the French War, it became the chief covering of the knight. His legs and arms were entirely encased in plate; under a close-fitting shirt or "jupon" he wore a steel cuirass; and only round the neck, the groin, and the arm-pits, where plate could not easily be adapted to the quick movement of the limbs, was any mail displayed. Within another hundred years it had dropped out altogether from the knight's equipment, and he rode to battle encased from head to foot in complete plate, cleverly jointed, and its curving contours so ingeniously contrived that a blow of lance or arrow would glance off and nowhere find a purchase.

The Bow.—It is an axiom of warfare that the defence follows and adapts itself to improved weapons of offence; and to this rule the introduction of plate armour was no exception. It came in as an answer, and a necessary answer, to the bow; for, as is obvious enough, the arrow, which might pierce or penetrate between the links of a mail suit, would glance off harmless from the smooth surface of the plate, and the importance of wearing this more adequate protection naturally increased as Archery became more deadly. Bows were of three types: first, there was the Short-bow, used at Hastings, and both before as after; a weapon not more than 4 feet long, its string drawn to the breast and discharging an arrow to no considerable range. Second was the Arbalest, or Cross-bow, the string of which was drawn back into position by a small winch attached to the haft of the centre piece. The cross-bow discharged a short bolt about 18 inches long to a distance of 200 yards, but its great drawback was the length of time required for winding up the gear, and the rate of discharge was of necessity comparatively slow. Yet on the Continent, as we shall see, the cross-bow was still the fashionable arm. The long-bow, which eventually out-fought it, was a purely English weapon, or, rather, there is good reason to suppose that it was borrowed from the Welshmen in the course of the border wars. It was made of elm, ash or hazel, and was about the height of a man from tip to tip. Its string was drawn to the ear, not

to the breast. Its shaft, plumed with feathers, measured a yard. Its range was anything up to 300 paces, and, since good marksmanship had been deliberately fostered by long practice on the village butts, the accuracy of fire was nothing short of marvellous. It would pierce armour and kill at 200 yards, and the normal rate of discharge was as much as twelve shots a minute. This extraordinary weapon was, as we have said, at the time confined to England: the scientific use of it had been developed during the Scottish wars, and along with its employment a new method of tactics had been evolved, which was to play a decisive part in the coming French campaign.

We are, in fact, arriving at a new chapter in the art of war. Hastings (as was said at the time) marked the beginning of an epoch, establishing the supremacy of horsemen over foot. That tradition had held the field for two centuries and more: it was the tradition upon which the Crusades were fought and the English Civil Wars: at Lewes and at Evesham, Simon on the one part, and Prince Edward on the other, had led mounted knights. It was this tradition which still held vogue upon the Continent. There at least the feudal knight was everything. Almost of necessity a rich or noble man himself, or in the employment of such, he regarded warfare as the special privilege of his class, an opportunity for the display of his own peculiar prowess. Chivalry no doubt produced brave men, but it was more often than not a hindrance to good tactics. French knights, too, often dashed about the battle-field in quest of a worthy foe to meet their lance and swell the honour of their arms, but taking little heed of the larger movements of the battle, or of the part assigned to the more humble foot-soldier and archer, whom they, as great lords, despised. Very differently had English knights now learned the art of war. They fought as members of an organised united host. They co-operated with the archers, who were thrown forward on front or flank and allowed to prepare the way like the guns in modern war. Above all, they had learnt the all-important lesson that, with this co-operation of long-range bow-fire, dismounted knights were more valuable than knights on horseback. Sudden ground, a well-directed missile, or any of a dozen such accidents lay in wait for the man who depended wholly upon his extremely vulnerable mount. The English knight, therefore, preferred to send his charger to the rear and trust his legs. For a defensive fight at least, there is no doubt that he was right. Halidon Hill (and it was not alone) had proved as much. The verdict of Hastings had in short been utterly reversed, and the Frenchmen did not know it. They still had unbounded faith in the invincibility of their horsemanship. They counted Englishmen (as Petrarch says) "the most timid of barbarians," and little did they guess what a rude surprise for them Edward III had now in store.

II

Edward in France.—The campaign of 1346, which Edward led in person, was not in point of fact the first of the War. There had been border fighting in Aquitaine; Edward himself had fought a battle in Flanders seven years before; and off Sluys the English fleet had won a notable victory at sea. Nevertheless, it was with the landing of Edward at La Hogue on 22nd July, 1346, that the real business at last began. Why the King chose to disembark his troops on hostile soil (for Normandy, of course, had been in French hands since John) is not too clear to us; perhaps it was not so very clear to him. He might have been expected to go direct to Aquitaine, where at the moment the French were pressing hard. Perhaps he thought that a diversion in the north would best relieve this pressure on the south. Perhaps he already meditated a sudden dash on Paris itself. Perhaps, finally, the adverse winds determined his somewhat impatient mind; for in any case Edward was more of a fighter than a general. He had a reckless instinct for doing the bold thing, irrespective of the accepted rules of strategy, and certainly in this campaign he committed all the blunders it was possible for a general to commit. Once landed, he made no sign of haste, but wandered in a leisurely, aimless manner through the fields of Normandy, harrying and burning as he went. Arrived before Rouen, he found the bridges broken and the passage of the Seine impracticable. Instead of settling down to secure and garrison what towns he held, he now determined to plunge yet deeper into France, and, as though to render all retreat impossible, he actually sent his fleet of transports home. Then at last he set his face definitely eastwards and marched for the capital of France. Such dilatory tactics had naturally allowed the French to muster their reserves, and an immense army of 100,000 men was encamped at St. Denis awaiting his arrival. Edward's force was quite inadequate to offer battle; and he turned (once more with what rash speculation it is difficult to guess) towards Flanders and the Channel coast. Perhaps he hoped something from the Flemings who were just rising in his support; perhaps he had some notion of effecting his retreat safely by the Channel ports. The real truth was that he was heading directly into a trap and courting by his audacity an irretrievable disaster.

Edward Marches North.—The French host was close upon his rear, and almost ahead of him upon his eastern flank, when Edward struck the lower reaches of the river Somme. He counted on crossing near Abbeville and making his way northward up the coast; but what was his dismay when he discovered that the local French militia was before him. The bridges were broken; the fords strongly held. There was no passage for him to the north. The sea was on his left. The main French host in overpowering numbers was closing in behind and on his right. Nothing, it seemed, could save him, when as by a miracle fortune offered him a desperate chance. Near the Somme mouth Edward learnt

of a ford passable only at low tide. It was but lightly held, as it so happened, and he pushed his troops across in the nick of time. Once they were over, the tide rose, and the French coming up behind stood

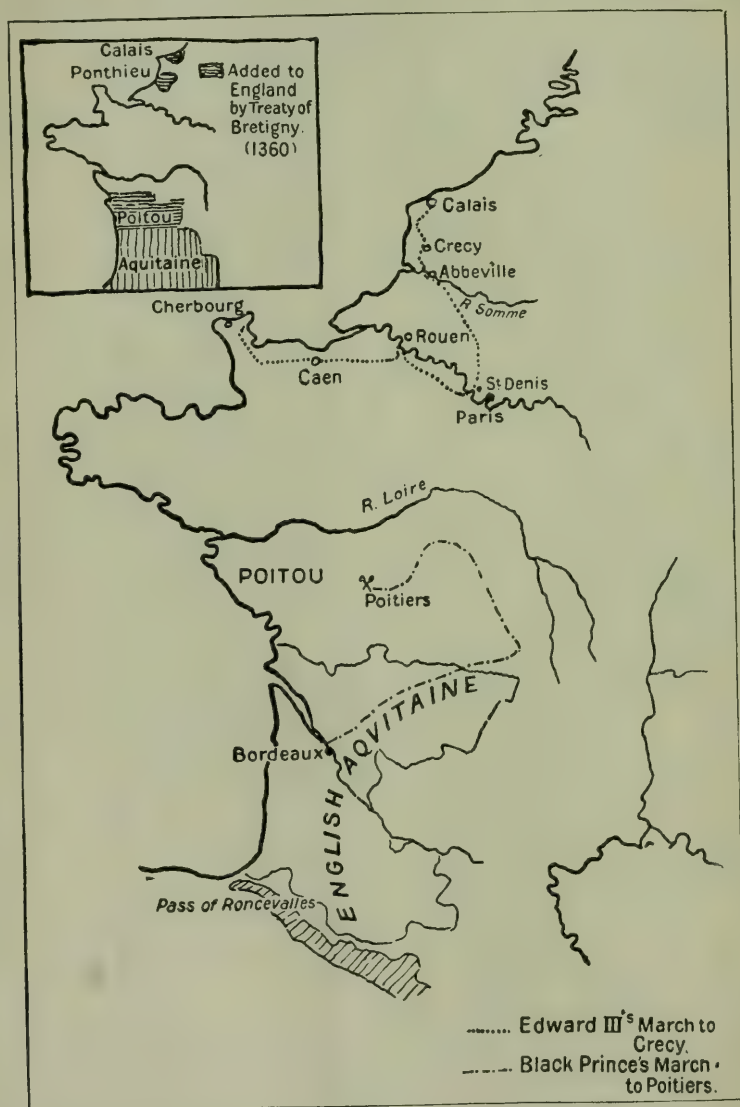


FIG. 14.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE FIRST PART OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

impotent, baulked of their prey like Pharaoh at the crossing of the Red Sea.

The Battle of Crecy.—During that day and the next, Edward pushed on; then, with that fine audacity which marked his movements through the

whole campaign, he halted his troops near the village of Crécy, faced about, and prepared to give battle to his pursuers. Next morning he dismounted his knights, sending their horses to the rear, and formed of them three "battles," or divisions, which he disposed as follows. At the head of sloping hill-side near the village he posted two—the right under the young Prince of Wales, to history better known as the Black Prince; and he set a projecting wedge of archers in the gap between the two as well as on the flanks. The third "battle" he kept in reserve under his personal command, himself mounting a neighbouring windmill to get better observation of the field. It was the morning of 26th August.

At the very hour when the English were taking their stations at Crécy, the French host, ignorant of their whereabouts and careless in the excitement of pursuit, was streaming up the northward road from the crossings of the Somme. Towards evening, as the bell of Crécy church tolled vespers, the vanguard sighted the English host quietly expecting them upon its hill. The foremost French knights, hot in their enthusiasm, barely drew rein; even had they been willing to retire, the pressure of their companions hurrying up the roads behind them made it impossible. Their King's order for a halt was never heard or never heeded, and they were committed to a battle almost before they knew it, without scarcely pause for preparation or thought for tactical alignment. They outnumbered the English by perhaps three to one, and with proper handling the day indeed must have been theirs. Yet they fought as a rabble, and the battle was no sooner joined than it was lost.

Nevertheless, some show of order was at first observed. Genoese cross-bowmen were sent forward to play upon the English ranks, but, as they drew on, the storm with which the sky had long been threatening, broke, thus complicating their task. While the English kept their weapons dry, the rain beat on the Genoese, wetting their bow-strings, and the low sun bursting from the clouds blinded their aim. The first volley fell short of the English line by perhaps a score of yards. Very different was the answer: the English long-bowmen took one pace forward, then poured such deadly hail upon the Genoese that their ranks were shattered and they turned. Falling back upon the cavalry, they caused fresh confusion in the already disordered host. The French knights, despising them for cowards and traitors, cut at them as they came, tried to head them back, then, bursting through, themselves set their horses at the hill. Down came the arrow-shower once more, like a modern-day barrage of artillery, "nailing helmet to head," and piercing arms and legs clean through. The havoc this time was indescribable. The horses (still at this date armourless) went down pell-mell under the bolts. Others from behind stumbled on the fallen: the onset was checked dead.

Meanwhile the English archers continued to pour their volleys into the struggling mass. Hardly an arrow missed its mark, and hardly a single Frenchman won through to reach the English line. It was simple butchery. Yet, as often as fresh reinforcements came hurrying up along

the Abbeville road, they renewed the insane attempt, and the butchery was repeated. Twilight fell, yet through the gathering dusk the spasmodic disconnected charges still went on. At times, indeed, they succeeded in pressing to where the English "battles" stood. Once the Black Prince, hard put to it beat them back, appealed to his father for reserves. "Let the boy win his spurs," replied Edward, and sent but thirty men. His confidence was justified; the dismounted men-at-arms were more than a match for the French cavalry, and, as at Waterloo, the English squares held firm under the shock. With darkness (or, as some say, with midnight) the charges at length ceased: the French host was no more, and, when next morning the English resumed their northward march along the coast, they left from ten to twenty thousand enemy

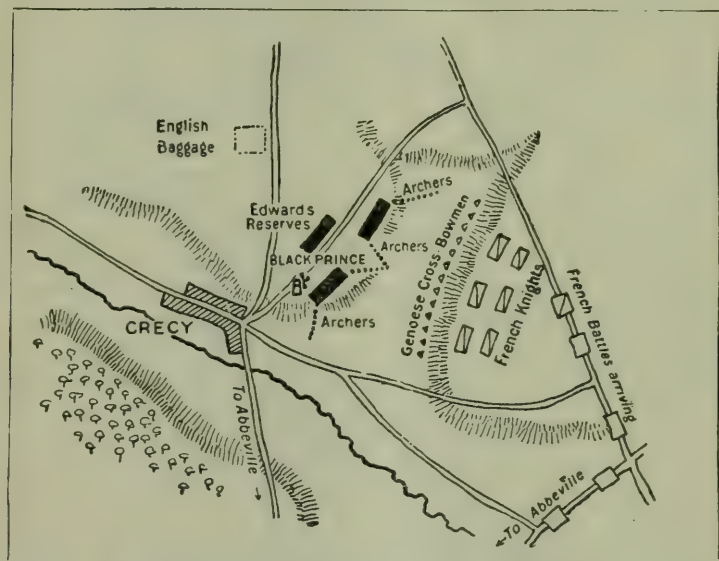


FIG. 15.—BATTLE OF CRECY, 1346.

dead upon the field. Their own losses were a few dozen bowmen, forty men-at-arms, and two knights.

By 4th September Calais was reached, and the army, reinforced and revictualled from England, sat down to besiege the city. Eleven months later to a day the inhabitants surrendered, Calais became an English town, and continued to be an English town till it was lost in Mary's reign. During two centuries this Gibraltar of the English Channel gave England indisputable command of the narrow seas; and what was more to Edward's immediate purpose, it secured England free access to the Flemish ports and uninterrupted passage for her precious wool to the buyers of Bruges and Ghent. Yet this solid material outcome of the victory was by no means chief among its fruits. The fame of what Englishmen had done resounded throughout Europe; and, while giving

to England a new importance in the world, it implanted in her own people a new and unalterable conviction, proudly cherished through perhaps five centuries, that, man for man upon the field of battle, one English soldier was worth at least three French.

The Black Prince.—By Crecy the English interests northward had been well secured: it had also served for the time being to divert attention from the south; yet to maintain England's hold there still needed her best efforts, and, when serious hostilities began once more, Aquitaine was the scene of the action. Crecy had been followed by a nine years' lull. The terrible ravages of the Black Death in 1349 had crippled England. The same year Philip of France had died and handed the crown to his less worthy son, King John. But in 1355 the Black Prince, now a full-grown man, went out to Aquitaine. He took up his quarters at Bordeaux, where he spent what time he was not raiding over the border into France, in hunting, feasting, holding tourneys and Round Tables, and in general bringing the fashions of chivalry up to date. About this illustrious warrior, as about perhaps none else, the splendour of mediæval romance has gathered. His life (as Froissart tells of it) was spent amid the gaiety of high-spirited adventurers, in an atmosphere of heroic deeds, the blaze of armorial pageantry, nodding plumes and golden trappings. War was to him more game than science. In the lists or on the field he was the soul of valour and of courteous etiquette. When on return from Crecy his father instituted the noble order of the Garter, he was the first to bind upon his leg the emblem which vowed honour and homage to the gentler sex. Yet such was the mixture of his character and the narrow limits of his chivalric ideals that, during his forays into France, no barbarian could have exceeded his brutalities; and, when he and his host had passed through some smiling valley of Touraine or Languedoc, it was said that even the inhabitants themselves could scarcely recognise their homes again. To this paragon of knighthood, peasants were no better than so much dirt, battle-fodder for the exploits and glorification of great princes like himself.

Poitiers.—In the autumn of 1356 the Prince was returning from a raid through the Poitou country that lay between the Loire and Aquitaine. A French host was after him, led by King John himself, and presently the Prince found himself caught near the ancient walled town of Poitiers. It was a case of retreating without the spoils of his adventure or not at all, and he refused to leave them. A day or so was spent in fruitless parley, and then, on the morning of 19th September, the Prince made a move to get away. The French cavalry were down on him upon the instant, forcing him to recall his van and fight it out. The position held by the English was the line of a quickset hedge, running along a ridge of rising ground, and the French, to come at it, were forced to attack uphill through muddy lanes and over sodden ground further obstructed by rows of straggling vines.

As at Crecy, their numbers, though perhaps three times superior,

never told. They came up against the narrow frontage, bunched in three successive "battles," each ranged behind the other; and this time (except for the advance party of horsemen) they attacked on foot. This they did, partly by reason of the broken ground, partly at least in imitation of the English tactics of ten years before. But they had strangely mistaken the moral of that fight. The chief merit of dismounted men lay in a defensive battle. For knights top-heavy with their casing of plate armour to struggle several furlongs over sticky ground and at the end of it engage in battle with a desperate enemy was more than human strength could stand. Before the quick volleys of the long-bows and the skilful sword-play of the English knights, the first "battle" broke. The second, out of heart at its discomfiture, fled also

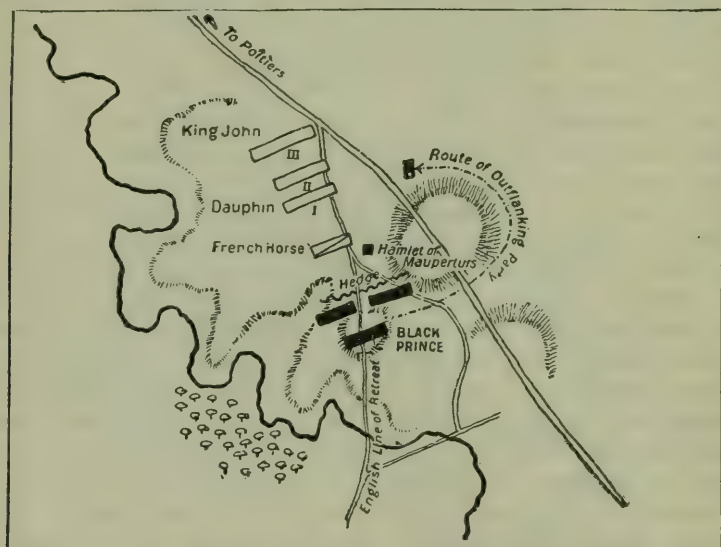


FIG. 16.—BATTLE OF POITIERS, 1356.

—a monstrous stroke of luck. But the day was not yet won. King John, with the third and by far the largest battle still at his disposal, could even now count as many men as could the Prince, and not without confidence he led forward these fresh and untouched troops against the spent defenders of the thorn hedge. The moment was critical, but the Black Prince, staking all, called up his last reserve of three hundred knights, left the shelter of the hedge, and launched his whole force downhill to meet this last assault. The clash of contact was heard on the Poitiers walls, seven miles away, and for a while the issue wavered, till a tiny English band, sent by a devious route to take the Frenchmen in the rear, struck home and clinched the day. While the rest fled, King John and many nobles still fought on and were taken prisoners where they stood. The Prince, generous in victory as gallant on the field, entertained his royal captive to supper in the tent, waiting on his needs

with his own hands. He could afford to be generous; for in the person of King John he held the trump card for a successful peace.

Peace.—In 1360, the Treaty of Bretigny closed the first and most creditable phase of the Hundred Years' War. It is true that Edward thereby abandoned the claim to the French throne; but substantial gains were his. Two important provinces were ceded to him by the French: firstly, the county of Ponthieu, just south of Calais, and the scene of his first great victory in France; and secondly, the frontiers of English Aquitaine were extended northward to the banks of the Loire by the surrender of Poitou, where the other triumph had been won. Yet the real fruit of Crécy and Poitiers was glory and not lands. A fickle thing is glory; and, though the Treaty of Bretigny marked the summit of England's fortunes, it marked also the beginning of a swift decline.

This agreement between monarchs brought no peace between the borders. Bands of mercenary soldiers, lacking other occupation, kept up the game, plundering defenceless peasants, holding prisoners to ransom, and fighting one another when they met. These "free companies" became a fashion. Notable captains led them, spreading wide the fame and terror of their arms. Kings winked at what went on, and even princes joined the sport and purchased the services of these ruffian bands. Anxious to secure the throne of Castile for some scoundrelly ally, the Black Prince (now Governor of Aquitaine) marched with his brother John of Gaunt across the Pyrenees. Making his way by Roncesvalles (the famous pass where Roland and Oliver did battle with the Moors) he won a resounding victory beyond. But such victories were dearly bought: slowly England's strength was being sapped, and, as little by little the two nations drifted once again into open war, the French rallied to redeem their honour and win back their lands. They had learnt a lesson from their defeat: invaded, they now no longer offered battle in the field, but clung to their walled fastnesses and towns. Their wily Marshal, du Guescelin, showed himself one too many even for the Black Prince himself, and it was under the humiliation of a failing cause that this greatest of English warriors drew slowly to his end. When in 1376, one year before his father, death carried him away, he had lived long enough to see his life's work all undone. Of the whole English territory in France, only Calais and a narrow strip of seaboard round Bordeaux remained intact. Courteous to the end, the Prince called his followers to his bedside and begged their pardon for any wrong that he had done. It was doubtless freely given; yet a very different answer might the great Prince have had from the homeless villagers of Southern France. The harvest of such royal knight-errantry as his is bitter-sweet. His life was spent upon a doubtful cause; and, dying, he left behind him waste, want, and misery beyond power of human reckoning—and a name.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND IGNORANCE

I

In the panorama of a nation's history the splendid figures of great princes riding to their wars are apt, as a rule, to loom disproportionately large. There have been times, however, when some accident of fate has plucked the more humble folk from the dim background of their unobtrusive drudgery, and has thrust them forward as it were to the very footlights of the stage. And so it was now. The fifty years of Edward III, so brilliant on the rolls of military fame, were years of crisis at home, years of unsettlement among the least accounted of his subjects. During three reigns already the little men of England had been slowly lifting up their heads, and now, while their king was busy fighting on the stricken fields of France, they too were busy doing battle with other enemies and in another cause. That cause was the cause of liberty against oppression. Their enemies were two: poverty was one, and ignorance the other.

Since the days of the Conquest and before, the life of the countryside had taken (as we have seen) a more or less settled shape. The local magnate not merely owned the land; in a certain sense, he owned also most of the men who lived upon it. Under the strong ties of an immemorial and still unquestioned custom, these men were bound to serve, honour, and obey him as their feudal lord. They *belonged* to his manor or estate, might not quit it under penalties of law, could not, if they would, neglect their tale of weekly labour—one day or two, or even three out of the seven, being claimed and rendered as his feudal due. Yet time stands still for no man; and, since we last spoke of them, the peasants have greatly changed, and changed in at least two ways. First, many “villeins,” or tied labourers, have now bought their liberty outright and are become freemen, free to dispose of their labour as they choose, free to move about from place to place. Others again, less fortunate than these, have made a bargain with their lord, and, instead of the part-time work they rendered hitherto, now pay him a sum of money or its equivalent in kind. This second class is thus free of its enforced labour, but still tied to the manor and not free to move. The arrangement suits the master no less than it suits the serf: he has found by long experience that part-time labourers are little use for shepherding his flocks; he has found, too, that a ploughman ploughs much better if he works for an honest wage, and not simply because he must. So my lord is by no means sorry to take Hodge's rent in lieu of Hodge's labour, and with the proceeds of that rent he makes shift to hire a ploughman or a shepherd, it may be some wandering fellow who is free to take service where he will, or it may be even Hodge himself.

In whichever case, the scheme works well. The wages asked are reasonably low and the income from the "rents" is adequate to meet them. The men work harder; the manor is better tilled; the landlord thrives. Like the Rich Fool in the Gospel, he chuckles at his wealth and multiplies his barns. Then, when he, like the Rich Fool, expects it least, the catastrophe occurs.

The Black Death.—In the year of grace 1349, there came travelling westwards across Europe, from Italy to France, and from France again to England, a devastating plague. Men called it the Black Death: it was a form of epidemic strongly resembling the Bubonic Plague still prevalent in India. It began with a swelling in the armpits, high fever, violent spasms, and vomiting of blood. Black spots broke out over the body (whence the illness took its name). Death was almost inevitable, and it was fearfully swift. "Many," says the chronicler, "being attacked in the morning were carried out of this world's affairs by noon." In many parts there were no living left to bury those who died. Record of the mortality in some monastic houses has come down: at Hevringland Priory all the inmates died, at St. Albans just four-fifths. Of the entire population of the country it is thought one-third must have perished. Whole villages stood empty; flocks were shepherdless; fallows went untilled. The result for my lord of the manor is obvious enough: where was he to find stout fellows now to hire?

To say labour was scarce is far below the mark: in parts it was not to be had for love or money; and, according to the law of supply and demand (a law which to ourselves the experience of the war has now made so familiar), the inevitable happened. The rate of wages soared. When a master offered the customary pay, the free labourer said, "Thank you for nothing," and was off to find a better job elsewhere. Landowners were competing to secure his services, and he could get almost anything he asked. Even with the tied villein-tenants, the outlook was little better. When, to meet his increased wage-bill, the landowner endeavoured to put up the rents, they positively went "on strike"; some, though by law forbidden to quit their home estate, decamped and sought a market for their services elsewhere. Thus was my lord caught, as it were, between two fires: he could find neither men to hire nor income to pay them with. But luckily (or rather, as it turned out, unluckily) for him, the landowner was still politically a very powerful man. Parliament, both Commons and Lords alike, was almost wholly composed of landowners; and, with a short-sighted futility, which might serve as a warning to all reactionary and biassed legislators, the members determined to hurry to the rescue of their threatened class. They passed a law—known as the Labourers' Statute—ordaining that all wages should remain exactly what they were before the plague. They even attempted further to fix prices, just as modern governments have tried to do. They might as well have tried to stop the wind from blowing. The peasants snapped their fingers at the regulation. The landowners themselves, finding that labour was unpro-

curable and that harvest would not wait, simply evaded it. Parliament repeated the statute, increased the penalties, even proposed to punish its breach with death. In vain; wages still went up, and up they stayed, and not all the King's horses and all the King's men could have brought them down again.¹

Peasants' Grievances.—Rural England was still in this unquiet and revolutionary condition when the year of Edward's jubilee and death approached. The peasants, well-fed and prosperous as never heretofore, were spirited and defiant. They resented interference with their new-won liberties, and listened eagerly to schemes for winning more. Agitators (as always at such times) appeared. Soldiers home from the French wars talked big in village taverns and fostered the growing discontent. Priests in the pulpit took the people's side.² One in particular, a priest of Kent, John Ball by name, propounded doctrines of a new and startling kind. All men were equal, he declared, sprung as were all alike from the same parents, Adam and Eve. Society as it stood was rotten. That the rich man should parade in his velvet and his ermine, while the poor man shivered in his threadbare frieze, was clean against nature, justice, and God's law. It lay with the folk themselves to set this right, to level all distinctions between poverty and riches, lord and serf, and to have all things in common like the early Christian saints. So talked this Socialist of the fourteenth century; and very soon his gospel of equality caught hold. The watchword of the movement became the doggerel rhyme:

When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?

Wycliffe, the theologian (of whom more shall be told anon) said something much in the same strain, and, though he was misinterpreted, his authority was quoted in John Ball's support. Thus did religious zeal and a blind but honest instinct for reform swell the courage of the malcontents. A secret league, called the Great Society, sprang up to link the centres of intrigue. Dark hints and messages passed to and fro between town and country-side. "John Schep biddeth you beware of guile in the borough and starf together in God's name." "John Ball greeteth you well all and chere you to understand that he hath rungen your bell." Such sayings, whatever their meaning, were laid to heart. The train was ready for the great explosion. It needed now but some sudden spark to fire it.

Peasants' Rising.—As the long reign of Edward drew to a close, the days were dark with the shadow of military failure and heavy with

¹ As is to be expected, the effects of the Black Death varied considerably in different parts of the country. Recent study of manorial records shows that in some places great changes had already taken place, and that in others not even the Black Death itself produced any immediate result.

² These, however, were in direct opposition with the great church dignitaries who, whether as ministers of the Crown or landlords of large estates, supported the existing order.

the burden of its cost. Men will pay with good grace for victory, but never for defeat; and to raise fresh money for the painful wars in France became at every step more difficult. In the year of Edward's death a "poll" tax was levied, taking so much "per head" from all the population. The new King, Richard, the Black Prince's son, was young and ill-advised; and three years later the unpopular levy was repeated—a shilling per head from every family in England; and, though the rich in each district were bidden help their poorer neighbours, yet for the humblest couple the minimum was 4d.—the equivalent of two days' wages in the time before the Plague. The tax was bitterly resented; the people's blood was up; one more act of brutality, and patience would burst its bounds. The tax in the first instance was very carelessly collected, and the Government, dissatisfied with the results, ordered the collectors on their rounds again. The villagers mistook this visitation for a second tax, and in a moment they were up in arms. Essex was first; Kent followed a few days after, and Canterbury was overrun with revolutionary mobs. Risings in the north and west were more slow and less effectual, but the home counties were quickly in a blaze. There was no standing army, no regular police, and the upper classes were forced to take refuge in the woods. The Lord Chief Justice was caught in his flight and murdered. Halls were burnt and looted, monasteries attacked. But, amid all their violence, one strange conviction possessed the rebels' mind. Their wrongs, so they believed, would all be righted, if once they could reach the ear of the young boy who wore the crown. The revolt had started in the last week of May; by June the 12th, John Ball, Wat Tyler, and a great host of Kentish men were gathered on Blackheath, intent to press upon the King the abolition of both serfdom and landlords at a blow. The men of Essex under Jack Straw were round London to the north. Richard and his ministers were trapped and helpless.

The City of London, as it then was, lay in a narrow semicircle north of the Thames, stretching between the Temple and the Tower. It was linked to the southern bank by a single bridge; and by this the rebels crossed through the friendly collusion of the Alderman on guard. On Thursday, 13th June, the narrow ways of the winding cobbled streets were thronged with roving bands of hungry, wide-eyed countrymen. They were soon joined by the City 'prentices, who had grievances of their own, and by the City roughs, eager, as ever, for a brawl. Together they made their way to the Savoy Palace near the Strand. It belonged to John of Gaunt, the Black Prince's brother, uncle to the King, and the best hated man in all the land. The Palace was soon in flames. On to the gaols of Marshalsea, Westminster and Fleet, where doors were broken in and prisoners set at large. There remained the Tower, where were the King himself, and with him his Treasurer, his Chancellor the Archbishop, and other members of his court. These men the mob regarded as the chief source of late oppressions; and on the Friday the mob gathered round the fortress, clamouring for their blood. Richard

was but a child, and, though his physical courage was extreme, its moral counterpart was always lacking in him. He left the shelter of the Tower himself to hold a parley with the ringleaders, but while he was absent he allowed his soldiers to let in the mob. A hideous massacre ensued. A priest who chanced to be the friend of John of Gaunt was torn in pieces on the spot. The Archbishop, who was discovered in the chapel, celebrating the mass, was hurried from the altar and beheaded on Tower Hill. The Treasurer died with him; and their heads were posted over London Bridge. Thus was the blunder of the poll-tax most signally avenged.

But the play was not yet played out. The promises given by Richard to their leaders had not availed to disperse or pacify the mob. A

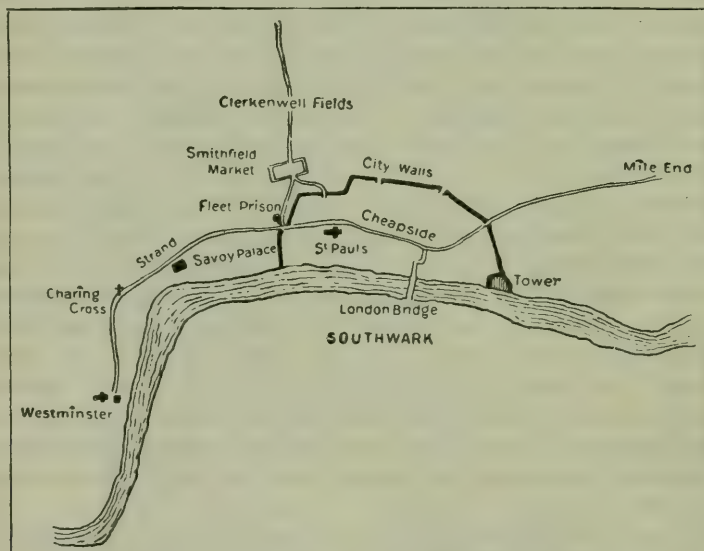


FIG. 17.—LONDON AT THE TIME OF THE PEASANTS' REVOLT.

fresh meeting was fixed for the morrow. It was to be held at Smithfield market, outside the northern walls. Here Richard, fresh from Westminster, where he had gone to pray at the Confessor's shrine, rode out with a company of courtiers on the morning of Saturday the 15th. And here Wat Tyler met him at the rebels' head, insolent in bearing, flushed with pride. Leaving the mob behind him Tyler rode over to the royal group and began his parley with the King. Presently one of the courtiers, stung by the fellow's rudeness, struck him from his horse. The crowd, mistaking what was up, raised the cry that they were making him a knight. But soon the truth was clear: the body was seen, and for one long instant the fate of Richard, the lives of all his following, and the safety of his realm hung trembling in the scales. Then Richard did the bravest act recorded of an English king. He was fourteen

years of age, but in those days the children of the great were old and capable beyond their years. Richard, without a tremor or sign of hesitation, rode straight across to where the mob was standing, and said simply, "I am your leader." They were false words (as the sequel was to prove), but they were brave words too, and they prevailed. Setting himself at their head, the boy led out the cowed and awe-struck peasants till they came to the Clerkenwell Fields. Here they were surrounded by armed bands of loyal burghers; they gave themselves up and were sent home.

Revenge and Results.—The rebellion was over, and the rebels even fancied they had won. They little knew the man in whom their confidence was placed. In his first parley with their leaders, Richard had promised them two things, to abolish once and for all the duties of service owed by villeins to landlords, and to fix the rents which landlords were to receive in exchange for these discontinued services, at the limit of 4d. an acre. The tone he now took, when fulfilment of these promises was asked, was very different. "Serfs you are: serfs you shall remain"; and already the orders had been given for a terrible revenge. The new Chief Justice was sent upon his rounds. Peasants were everywhere arrested, tried, hung, quartered, disembowelled by dozens at a time. Some were identified as murderers and dragged off to London city, there to suffer on the actual scene of their misdeeds. John Ball himself was caught and put to death. It would be unfair to lay the whole burden of the blame on a boy of Richard's years, but to acquit him altogether is impossible. At the very least he had gone back upon his word.

Thus the Peasants' Rising seemed for the moment to have failed. But this was hardly true. Serfdom indeed continued. But so did the bold and independent spirit of the serfs, and by slow degrees they gathered the reward of their persistence. In 1390 the Statute of Labourers was altered: the rate of wages was no longer fixed, but left to the discretion of the local courts. Landlords were frightened, and they began to see that free labour paid better in the end than forced. Bit by bit they yielded to the serfs and gave them their liberty, till by the end of the next century the great mass of the English peasantry was free. The yeoman farmer, working his own small acres, multiplied and thrived: his class was soon the backbone of the nation's strength. The villagers as a whole became much what they were till yesterday, farmhands, working for a pittance, still much dependent on the landowner or squire, but no longer at any rate his slaves. Thus easily and early did the folk of England break off their feudal bonds. The Peasants' Rising rang the death knell to a tyranny which long survived in other and less happy lands, and which after a long submission drove even the docile peasantry of France to the bloody Revolution of the eighteenth century.

II

It is an axiom of progress that liberty and knowledge must go hand in hand. The most down-trodden of folk are almost invariably the ignorant; and, before men can act for themselves, they must first have learnt to think for themselves. Now, though in mediæval England the great majority of men were quite illiterate, unable to read or write, or even sign their names, yet it must by no means be supposed that learning was altogether neglected. Knowledge of one sort or another was always in very great request. Clerks who could draw up documents, write records, keep accounts, were a necessity to all great households; and to become a clerk, as we have seen, was the first step up the ladder of promotion. But to become a "clerk" (as we also must remember) was simply another term for becoming a "cleric." Learning and religion were in those days inseparable; and, however lightly a clerk's vows were regarded, they none the less were vows. In short, the instrument of education was in the Church's hands. She was the great schoolmistress of Europe; and for the mediæval student to take her mark, the tonsure, on his head, was as natural and as necessary as for the modern undergraduate to don the gown.

Schools and Universities.—The earliest schools of which we hear were kept by monks or by cathedral clergy; and in almost every monastery or cathedral some members were told off to teach the boys. But by and by in many towns small independent schools sprang up where grammar and good behaviour were inculcated by an usher and his rod. These "Grammar Schools" were open to boys of every class, and cobblers and cowherds, as well as merchants and the like, found admission for their sons. After the Peasants' Rising an attempt was made to exclude the sons of villeins from the schools; but the ban is in itself another proof that even among the poorest a "clerkly" education was in some request. Happily, at the very time of this ungenerous measure, learning was reinforced in an important way. Since the Black Death, from which the clergy suffered more than any other class, there had been a sore scarcity of priests; and the need of finding some new remedy was borne in on no less a man than William of Wykeham, the Chancellor of the realm. As Bishop of Winchester, he undertook to found a school there, in which poor men's sons might be trained up to the priesthood, or at least to godly learning. No foundation on so complete a scale had ever before been attempted. Wykeham endowed his college with a large complement of lands, the rents from which were to cover all expenses. He provided for his seventy scholars in regal fashion. Hall and chapel, court and cloisters fit for the sons of kings; and, to round off his work, he built another college up at Oxford whither the boys might go to finish their studies to the end. Wykeham, moreover, was not alone in his munificence, nor unique in his educational enthusiasm. The University of Oxford, now over two centuries old, had quite lately been



SIEGE OF A CASTLE IN FRANCE

Fifteenth Century



A UNIVERSITY LECTURE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

endowed with other such colleges as his. Edward I's Chancellor, Walter Merton by name, had already founded Merton College, and Peterhouse at Cambridge had been established not long before.¹ In fact, just as in former ages pious men or conscience-stricken kings had built a monastery, or given money to the Church, so now it became the fashion with the rich to endow a school or found an Oxford College.² The Universities were thronged with students drawn from the yeomen's and tradesmen's families, and to be counted by their thousands. Never perhaps was education more esteemed, and seldom had more thought or money been expended on it.

Tyranny of the Church.—Directly, or indirectly, all this from first to last was the work of the Mother Church. All men who taught in schools or colleges held orders. Most of the undergraduates were "clerks." Wykeham's scholars took the tonsure. Even the school itself, though not a monastery, was planned and regulated on monastic lines. No woman, not even the laundress, was admitted to the precincts. The Bible was read out during meal-times. The chapel services were both numerous and long. Education, in short, however wide its scope, was a religious system still. Sad to say, this had a fatal and paralysing influence. Studies, it is true, were not by any means confined to the Bible and theology. The curriculum was liberal. Mathematics, astronomy, and a queer sort of wizardry called natural science, found their place beside philosophy and Latin.

But for all that, these studies were, broadly speaking, dead: they were a stiff academic exercise; there was no true spirit of inquiry, no honest search for truth. Men simply accepted the theories and principles which they were taught, derived for the most part from the works of Aristotle, the great philosopher of Ancient Greece. Next to the Church herself, Aristotle was their one infallible authority; and more than half their time and three-quarters of their energy were spent in conning and interpreting what he had said. They learnt by this method to quibble and split straws extremely well; but they did not learn to think, and, what is worse, the Church did not intend that they should do so. For, to disclose the truth, the Church was a tyrant mistress. Her chief principle—and the main pillar of her strength—lay in the comfortable doctrine, that, whatever happened, and whatever men might say, *she* must invariably be right. Friar Bacon, the pioneer of English scientists, was clapped into prison because his theories and discoveries happened not to suit the Church, just as Galileo, the Italian, at a much later date, was tortured by the Inquisition for holding the highly unbiblical idea that the earth moved round the sun. On religious matters,

¹ Previous to the foundation of these colleges, the University students had lived in lodgings and hostels, shifting for themselves as best they could, and leading on the whole a loose, bohemian sort of existence.

² This was the more encouraged by the fact that Edward I, seeing how much property and land the Church had already absorbed, had forbidden the practice of leaving gifts of this sort to the Church (Act of Mortmain).

more especially, was all independent thinking barred. The only attitude of mind to satisfy the Church was an attitude of orthodox credulity.

Superstitions of the grossest sort were deliberately encouraged, and impossible things were asserted and believed about saintly visions, holy relics, and the nature of Heaven or Hell, and woe betide the rash misguided man who harboured doubts. Of all the tenets of the Christian creed, as it then was, perhaps the most central and most popular was the doctrine of the Mass. The Mass was held to be a miracle, no less, though it took place every day. The Wine and Bread, once touched by the consecrating priest, became, as if by magic, the actual Blood and Body of our Lord. This theory of Transubstantiation, as they called it, was accepted without question. And who, in point of fact, would wish to question it? Certainly not the men of thought and learning, who were themselves the children and servants of the Church, and who knew better than to cast doubt on an authority from which after all their own personal influence was drawn. Like the Pharisees of old, they held the key of knowledge, and they were fully determined that no one else should touch it. Certainly, they gave the ignorant laity small chance. Of the Bible itself the common folk knew nothing at first hand. A bishop's special licence was required before a layman could so much as read it: even then it was in Latin, for only small portions, such as the Psalms, had as yet been rendered into English. The services, and, above all, the mass, were recited in the same unintelligible language; and Christ's teaching, if it ever reached the folk at all, came to them through the priest, and meant whatever the priest desired that it should mean. The fact is, there were things in the Bible which did not exactly fit the theories of the Church; and to have men's attention called to them would have been highly inconvenient. Laymen, therefore, were given to understand that their duty in the matter was to listen and obey, but on no account to do any thinking for themselves.

The mediæval Church, we must after all remember, was an institution in which the entire well-being of society seemed rooted. To her, more perhaps than to any other cause, had been due the slow rise of civilisation out of the welter of the Dark Ages. She spoke with an authority far above the authority of any mere monarch; and to question that authority was accounted worse than treason to the state, and deserving of the vilest of deaths. Such power, wielded with discretion and tempered by reasonable concessions, might have outlived many centuries. But it was not to be; already the seeds of decay were visible; the Church was rotting at the core. Her higher ministers (though simple parish priests still did good work) were often selfish, callous and indulgent; her monks had grown fat and idle; even the friars, for all their early promise, were now no better than the rest. Theirs was perhaps the saddest case of all. They had come over full of the noble teaching and self-sacrificing zeal of St. Francis and St. Dominic, nearly two centuries before. They had gone through England, penniless, bare-foot, begging their way, like the Apostles sent out by our Lord; and

as they went, they preached on village greens and carried comfort to the poor and sick. Now all was changed: the friar, as Chaucer tells of him in the fourteenth century, was a wanton merry fellow, haunting taverns, ogling girls and making a good livelihood by "pardons" which he obligingly dispensed for cash. The friar's degradation was a type of what was coming over the Church. The great fabric was crumbling. Even the Papacy itself was in dispute. For a time there were two popes: one at Rome, the other at Avignon in South France. Both claimed the authority of Peter, but there was hardly room for both in Peter's chair. Men could believe in one supreme head, one spiritual dictator, but they found it difficult, however much they tried, to put implicit faith in two, the more especially as the two did not agree. The Great Schism was healed again in the year 1418; but then the harm was done. The Pope's supremacy was never what it had been; the confidence of Europe had been shaken; the Reformation was in sight.

Meanwhile, in the England of King Edward I's day, feeling against the Papacy was running high. For one thing there was no more expensive luxury than obedience to the Bishop of Rome. At a time when every spare penny was needed to support the wars in France, here was the Holy Father drawing a perpetual tribute from the English Church's funds, and claiming even more than what he got. Here he was, again, appointing foreign favourites to fat posts in English sees, and therefrom, we may be sure, sucking no small advantage. Eager to have a finger in all ecclesiastical affairs, he was for ever encouraging the English clergy to appeal against the judgment of their own superiors to himself. To a people of growing independence such meddling, grasping tactics were intolerable; and Edward III had passed two laws to bring them to an end. One stopped the "Provisors," or letters of appointment, whereby the Pope was wont to slip his nominees into English benefices without the sanction of the King. The other, called the Statute of Praemunire, forbade the English clergy, on whatever grounds, to make appeal to Rome. The Statutes, however, were none too rigidly enforced; the scandals still went on, feeling grew bitter, and the time had clearly come for some one to speak out.

Wycliffe's Protest.—The protest, when it came, was bold and strong. It came from an Oxford scholar, John Wycliffe by name, and Master of Balliol College. Englishmen had never been scrupulous to spare the feelings of the Pope. From William Rufus down to Edward III, a stout resistance had been offered to his claims; but always—be it noted—to his claims of temporal power or political authority. What nobody as yet had ever dared was to challenge his spiritual pretensions, his claim to be the inspired mouthpiece of Almighty God, with a perfect right to regulate the consciences and to dictate the religious beliefs of Englishmen. In this claim even the most bitter opponents of the Papacy had acquiesced; to challenge it would have been regarded as heresy in the last degree; and in that case Wycliffe was a heretic. What others only dared to think, he said without disguise. He denied that

the Church could have any head but Christ: the Pope was quite superfluous. He denounced (like Luther after him) all sales of pardons and indulgences for money; and (most shocking perhaps of all) he declared Transubstantiation to be unsound. Wycliffe was a bold man, or he would never have uttered such opinions to the world, but, better still, he had the strength of his convictions. Though bitterly attacked on every hand, he held stubbornly to all that he had said. Luckily he had many supporters and even some powerful friends; and when, as King Edward lay a-dying, they called Wycliffe to stand his trial in the Lady Chapel of Old St. Paul's, excitement grew intense. The Londoners as a whole were on his side; so too was John of Gaunt, anxious to curry favour with the mob at a time when any day might dawn upon a vacant throne, and possibly having an eye to the ecclesiastical spoils which reform might bring his way. Scarcely had the trial at St. Paul's begun, when it ended in a violent scene. John of Gaunt, who was present in Wycliffe's interest, threatened the Bishop of London and swore he would drag him out of the church by the hair of his head. Hearing this, the mob who had crowded in to watch proceedings, rushed to the rescue. A free fight ensued, and in the confusion Wycliffe was carried off by his supporters to a place of safety. Once more, in 1382, he was attacked for his views about the mass. He was not this time summoned to appear in person, but a council of clerics sat to review his crimes. Things looked black; John of Gaunt had turned against him; the Peasants' Rising had done his cause small good; the council was firmly resolved to pin his errors down. They were in the act of pronouncing his views to be heretical, when a violent earthquake shook the house: pinnacles and stones came toppling down; the clerics leapt up in panic from their seats. This startling omen was hailed by Wycliffe's friends as a sign of God's approval. At the very least it somewhat took the sting out of the Church's condemnation. Nothing was done. Wycliffe was left in peace; and two years later he died quietly in his country parsonage at Lutterworth in Leicestershire.

Wycliffe's Bible and Lollards.—Had this great thinker's work been confined to the mere expression of theological opinions, we should hear of him perhaps merely as an obscure though enlightened heretic without much claim to fame. But he did more than this.

Just as he had stood out for English liberty against the Papal rule, so also he stood out as a champion of the English poor. He denounced the tyranny of landlords, more especially that of the bishops, priors, and abbots, whose treatment of their serfs and tenants was the most crying scandal of the time. He even urged that Parliament should strip the Church of her enormous lands and wealth. But open violence he greatly disapproved: he never urged and he had no sympathy with the Peasants' Rising. It was by other means than these that he wished to improve the peasants' lot—by delivering them from the grip of priestcraft and superstition, by giving them true knowledge of Christ's life and teaching—in a word by educating their souls. To this end he instigated the

translation of the Bible into English that those who knew no Latin might read it for themselves. It was the first complete translation; for even Alfred's version (in the long-forgotten Anglo-Saxon) had only covered parts. Copies were made, by hand, of course, since printing was not invented; but, even so, large numbers must have existed; for at least a hundred still survive to-day.

Then, too, Wycliffe gathered round him, and sent as missionaries among the folk, a body of Poor Preachers. These simple men were genuine and saintly characters. Like the first friars, they renounced all worldly wealth. In many ways they bore a strong resemblance to the Puritans of later times, making it their habit never to use an oath, preaching not in the pomp of brodered vestments, but in simple russet gowns, preferring a simple service in the open air to an elaborate and pretentious ritual before some painted shrine. Men called them "Lollards"—"wastrels," as we should say—and generally poked fun at them. But, although their numbers were not great, they were very popular in many parts, more especially in Leicestershire and London. Even men of rank took up their cause: one, Sir John Oldecastle, a knight of Kent, and a friend of young Prince Hal, suffered with his life. His name became a byword and a butt for jokes; and Shakespeare, with scant justice (for he was a pious man), took him as a model for his ribald wine-bibbing character, John Falstaff. By and by, as the Lollard movement grew (and it even gathered strength after its founder's death), the authorities took fright. It had already been ordained that Wycliffe's Bibles should be burnt; and it was now determined to burn his preachers too. In 1401 an act was passed, "*de haeretico comburendo*," "for burning heretics," and a brutal persecution was begun. A few Lollards, but not many, had the courage to go to the stake for their opinions; some remained in hiding; but on the whole the cruel measure had the desired effect. The rot in the Church was temporarily stayed, and Wycliffe's cause had, to all appearances, lost.

But, as with the Peasants' Rising, failure was only on the surface. Deep down in men's minds a new force was set in motion, a force compelling them to throw off their blindfold allegiance to a despotic creed, and to seek the truth with their own eyes. Wycliffe and his Lollards had sown the hidden seed which, more than a century later, was to rise a towering tree, in the Reformation of a Protestant England. The growth was slow, as perhaps all such things must be; but the magic of the Pope's authority was doomed when the first word of honest doubt was spoken. For in that doubt was contained the most powerful of all solvents, Truth. The shackles began to loosen: the human spirit was struggling to be free again. The voice of Wycliffe had broken the spell.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RISE OF THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER AND THE FINAL
BOUT WITH FRANCE

I

Of all the years of the fourteenth century, now drawing to its close amid turmoil and distraction, the worst was assuredly the last. It witnessed the overthrow of England's "anointed king." It was the murderer and usurper triumphant on his throne. And its evil influence cast over the whole century that followed the blight of civil war. Henceforward, except when fighting abroad to win the crown of France, the kings of England were fighting to secure their own at home: men lost their sense of loyalty and came to regard successful treason as a respectable substitute for right. Moreover, the sources of revolution had now shifted. The principal enemies of peace were no longer the ordinary barons such as had troubled the Conqueror or John. More to be feared and infinitely more powerful was a new element of discord, the restless ambition of the Princes of the Blood Royal. There were many now who could boast that privilege; and, when once the precedent was set, there was to be no lack of pretenders to the throne. But the first family to set it, the first also to achieve success, was the House of Lancaster.

The desire to secure rich earldoms for his younger sons, however short-sighted a policy (as the sequel proved) was not an unnatural policy for an English king. Provide for them he felt he must; and, if the heiress to three counties went a-begging, it was hardly an opportunity to miss: certainly Edward III, with his many sons to settle, was not the man who could afford to miss it. His third son, John of Gaunt, he had accordingly betrothed to the Lady Blanche of Lancaster. By right of marriage Gaunt had become the Duke, and the title carried with it the estates. But it was an evil day for England when the great Duchy of the north passed into these hands. Gaunt was a born intriguer, and he used his power solely for his own selfish ends. During the last sad years of his father Edward he was occupied in scheming for the crown. Edward's best chancellor, William of Wykeham, he attacked and threw into disgrace. He took up Wycliffe's cry against the Church, supposing it would gain him public favour, and dropped it again when he found that it did not. With his brother, the Black Prince, Gaunt never quarrelled openly; and when his brother's son, the young Richard, became King, he gave his nephew some measure of support. But his loyalty was never above suspicion, and dark stories were current of his plots to assassinate the King. Men learnt, in short, to loathe and fear the great Duke of Lancaster; and, though Gaunt himself never dared to come out into the open, those fears were not misplaced. The realisation of Gaunt's sinister designs found ample fulfilment in his son.

Bolingbroke and Mowbray.—Henry of Bolingbroke, Gaunt's son and heir, was not a whit behind his father in ambition. He too had married the heiress to a great estate, gaining thereby half the lands of Hereford; and such influence as this position gave him he employed against his cousin, the young King. In 1388, when Richard, now turned twenty, was beginning to assert his own authority, Bolingbroke and other discontented earls, calling themselves the Lords Appellant, raised a large force of their retainers and marched upon the capital. They browbeat Richard, drove all his friends from office, and took the control into their own hands. To all seeming the party of Bolingbroke won a complete and easy triumph; but they did not know the King. Early next year he quietly informed them that being now of age he was old enough to manage his own affairs and meant to do so. He appointed fresh ministers of his own choice, brought back William of Wykeham into office, and for eight years ruled with tactful moderation. The conspiracy of the "Lords Appellant" he appeared to have forgotten; he even treated some of them with favour. It was mere play-acting: Richard had not forgotten and he did not forgive. He was only biding his time; and, when he struck, he struck hard. He murdered, beheaded, exiled, or imprisoned all of his early foes—excepting two. Those two were Thomas Mowbray and Henry Bolingbroke. Still treated with every mark of honour—promoted one to be the Duke of Norfolk, the other to be Duke of Hereford—they were lulled into a sense of false security. Then the blow fell. In 1398 Richard persuaded Bolingbroke to charge Mowbray with high treason, arranged to bring the issue to the test of arms, confronted the two in the lists at Coventry, and then, before the duel was begun, cried halt to it and gave sentence on them both. Mowbray was exiled for life. Bolingbroke was banned the country for ten years; and it became his turn now to meditate revenge. Richard, in truth, acted with a high hand; and by his ruthless exercise of royal power he had alienated others besides the nobility. In the coming hour of crisis none was to be found to take his side.

The next year when his father, old John of Gaunt, died, Bolingbroke, now Duke of Lancaster in his own right, decided that his exile had lasted long enough. Choosing the moment when Richard was away in Ireland, he landed on the Yorkshire coast. The Percies of Northumberland and other north-country earls soon joined him. Rebellion spread, and when Richard, who was long stormbound in an Irish port, set foot once more within the boundaries of his kingdom, it was only to find it was no longer his. He was caught wandering aimlessly between the castles of the west, sent a prisoner to Pontefract, and there murdered by an unknown hand. Such was Bolingbroke's revenge, and he occupied his dead cousin's throne with the title of Henry IV.

"Had Zimri peace that slew his master?" The crown sits uneasily on a usurper's head, and he seldom prospers long in his ill-gotten power. With what measure he has meted, it may be measured to him again, and he must ever fear to suffer his own victim's fate. Henry IV was clearly

a usurper for all his royal descent; and through all the days of his short, unhappy reign, the usurper's curse was his. Rebel after rebel rose against him, and he was allowed little rest. The first to take arms were the loyal friends of Richard, who still refused to credit the story of his death. Henry, however, was nothing if not prompt. He caught the conspirators and killed them without trial. He caused it to be put about that Richard had starved himself to death in prison: the body itself he had transported from Pontefract to London, and set on public view in old St. Paul's. His explanation, however, carried little weight; many declared that the body thus exposed was not the King's, and for long it was actually believed that Richard had escaped to Scotland, and there lay in hiding. Impostors appeared to keep the belief alive; and first the Welsh under Owen of Glendower, then the Scots under the Earl Douglas, took up the dead King's cause. Henry was sore beset; and to fill the cup of his adversity it needed now but the desertion of his friends. Soon his friends, too, turned against him.

Rebellion of the Percies.—Chief among those who had helped him to the throne were the Earl Percy of Northumberland, and Harry Hotspur, his high-spirited, ambitious son. True to the cause they had chosen, the Percies now rallied to Henry and gathered their forces against his enemies. They met Douglas and his Scots at Homildon Hill, defeated them, and made Douglas and many other nobles prisoner. Then Henry did a very foolish thing. Being in straits for money, and anxious to secure the prisoners' ransom for himself, he claimed them as his own. It was a fatal step: he had sadly misjudged the extent of his authority; and in offending the Percies he was estranging the very men who were least likely to brook such treatment from one who owed his crown to them. No part of England maintained so strong a sense of independence as the north. Since the times when Danes had settled there in Anglo-Saxon days, it had held itself much aloof. The strongest opposition to the Conqueror had been beyond the Humber; and even as late as the Reformation the northern folk were not by any means inclined to accept their orders from the south.¹ This spirit of defiance was now awakened at the insult offered by King Henry. The Percies turned against him. They released their prisoner, the Earl Douglas, summoned a Scottish host to their aid, and marched south to join forces with the Welsh Glendower. But Henry was too quick for them: he hastily threw his army across their road, met them at Shrewsbury and, after a bloody battle, defeated them severely. Hotspur was killed, Douglas captured, and, though Owen Glendower drew back into Wales, there to defy subjection all his life, the worst of the peril was over. After a second and feebler rising, the rebellion flickered out.

Though Shrewsbury Field secured the crown to Henry, it secured him little else. He was not long to enjoy rule: a wasting leprosy was

¹ The Pilgrimage of Grace (1536) was undertaken by the northerners as a protest against the Protestant movement of the South. It showed the conservative and independent spirit of North England in a strong light.

on him, and his days were numbered. But the battle had served at any rate to disclose the talents of a fit successor. Young "Prince Hal," who had there first won his spurs, was never the idle dissipated scapegrace which Shakespeare makes of him. The tale of how he tried on his father's crown in the royal bed-chamber has no support in fact. His friend, John Oldcastle, the notorious Falstaff of the plays, was, as we have seen, a pious adherent of the Lollard movement. The utmost we can safely say is that Henry IV was jealous of his son and firmly refused to abdicate on his behalf. It was not a wise decision, and the country breathed more freely when Henry of Lancaster slept with his fathers and Henry of Monmouth reigned in his stead. For he certainly had done "that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."

II

Quarrel with France.—Henry V, the second Lancastrian, was a far finer figure than the first. He possessed his father's spirit without his father's vices; and he did much to make Englishmen forget the crime which had first raised his family upon a stolen throne. His rule was firm and conscientious from the start. He did much to restore the unity and welfare of the distracted country. Above all, he diverted the warlike energies of his more restless and rebellious subjects into a more wholesome and patriotic channel. By a skilful but unscrupulous move of calculated policy, he revived the smouldering war with France, and both for himself and his successor he secured domestic peace by focusing attention on campaigns beyond the sea. The moment for renewing the attack could not have been better chosen. The power of France was on the wane: she had fallen on evil days, and her people were split from end to end by a bitter feud. Jealousy had sprung up between her two great princes, the Duke of Orleans in the west and Jean sans Peur, the Duke of Burgundy, who held sway over Flanders and north-eastern France. Jean sans Peur had procured the murder of his rival and the people took up the quarrel of its chiefs. While the citizens of Paris had risen and rioted in the murderer's support, the leading nobles had rallied to the victim's son. So the feud between "Burgundians" and "Orleanists" ran on (much to the advantage, as we shall see, of the English invader); nor was there anyone in France to check it. The great King, Charles the Wise, he who had driven back Edward's armies on the sea, was dead. In his place reigned one who was rightly nicknamed Charles the Mad. Every summer he went out of his mind, and every winter recovered his wits again; meanwhile his subjects, acting as they listed, were engaged in cutting one another's throats. His son the Dauphin was a high-spirited boy, but too young and foolish to unite the country. At home he was naturally the leader of the Orleanist or noble faction. His foreign policy was crude. When Henry V, intent on war, revived the old claim of Edward to the crown of France, the Dauphin tried first to buy him off and then insulted him. The story

goes that a basket of tennis balls was sent by the hand of his messenger to Henry, a jesting hint that for one of such tender years ball-play was far more suitable than war. It was an ill-timed pleasantry, more than enough to stir a Lancastrian's blood. Henry answered the challenge by landing an army on the Norman coast in the summer of 1415.

Agincourt.—The campaign which followed is among the most astonishing in history. In its main outline it was almost a repetition of the

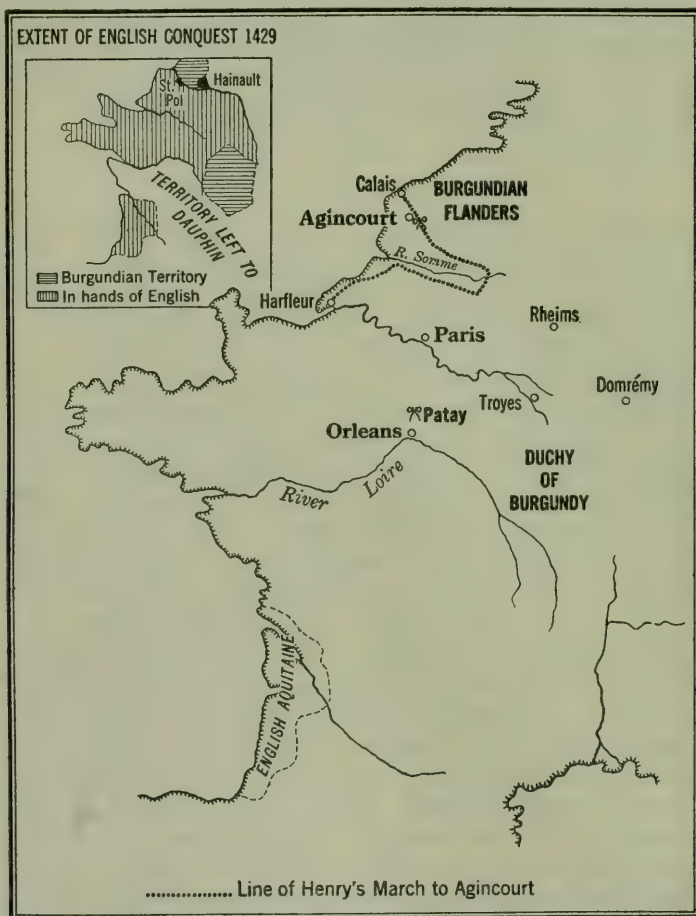


FIG. 18.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE SECOND PART OF HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

march to Crecy, but the crowning victory was in this case still more remarkable in that the odds against which it was won were perhaps twice as heavy. Even at the outset it was not a very large force which Henry landed near Harfleur at the mouth of the Seine. Ten thousand men were the very most he could muster, and the reduction of Harfleur—his preliminary objective—caused a serious diminution of his ranks.

The siege occupied six weeks. There was much bitter fighting through the hot summer weather; fever and dysentery made havoc of the host; and by the time that the place was carried and Henry free to move upon his way, he had lost a full third of what men he had. Nevertheless it was still a solid and well-found contingent. Henry was no reckless adventurer like the royal knight-errant who made the wild march to Crecy. Calais was now English, and, when he struck up through Picardy, he knew whither he was moving. His men were all trained soldiers. His preparations had been extraordinarily complete; every knight was provided with three spare chargers in reserve; carts were collected for the transport; smiths were in attendance. Even artillery of a sort was there; for the uses of gunpowder, discovered first by the "scientist" Friar Bacon, were beginning to be understood, and some monstrous cannon, useful at any rate in sieges, made now perhaps for the first time their appearance alongside English troops.¹ J

It is small wonder that the Frenchmen, remembering Crecy, hesitated to engage in open battle. Though they had composed their private differences for the time being and collected an enormous host, perhaps six times the English numbers, yet when Henry turned his face northwards and began his march on Calais, their generalissimo, the Constable, refused to fight. As the English advanced along the coast, he hung upon their flank. Even when they were checked at the line of the river Somme and forced to turn inland to find a ford, the opportunity was never used. It was not till Henry had come within two days' march of Calais that the Constable's reluctance was at last overruled. Then the French army cut in between the English and their goal, and facing southward stood astride the Calais road near Agincourt. It was 24th October and the eve of St. Crispin's day. The night was stormy, and as the Englishmen, worn out by long marching and drenched with the downpour, bivouacked among the apple-orchards of Maisoneelles, many there must have felt some sinking of the heart. But the perilous position had no terrors for King Henry; and the lines that Shakespeare has put into his mouth reflect truly his cheery confidence:

If we are marked to die, we are enow,
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men the greater share of honour.
God's will, I pray thee wish not one man more.

Next morning he took the field with the same cool courage against a force beside which his little army was a handful. By bad management, however, the French had "bunched" their host between two woods, and, as at Crecy and Poitiers, their numbers scarcely told. As usual the French attacked, while the English stood on their defence. Their archers, protected behind a row of pointed stakes, mowed down the enemy knights, as they came plunging and slipping over the greasy sodden ground. A small body hidden in the woods played upon the French-

¹ Certain small field pieces are said, however, to have been used at Crecy.

man's flanks, and, failing to break the English line, they faltered. The English bowmen's arrows were now expended, but they had done their work; seizing axes and weighted mallets in their hands, they followed with the knights and dashed out to the attack. Right through the first and second line this onslaught carried: the third "battle" turned, began to scatter, and then partly rallied. For the moment the fight was critical, and Henry, fancying an attack was threatening on his rear, ordered the slaughter of the prisoners he had taken. Hundreds were butchered where they stood; but the precaution was needless. The third "battle" showed no further stomach for the fight, and with its dispersal Henry was left victor of the field. His triumph was indeed complete. He left the Constable among the slain, and, more important, he held among the prisoners the Duke of Orleans himself. Even the folk at home were quick to recognise the overwhelming nature of his victory. On his return from Calais he received a great ovation. The houses of London were draped with curtains; triumphal arches were erected and a sky blue canopy, painted with clouds, and topped by angel figures, was stretched above the streets. Maidens danced him a welcome at the bridge. The mayor and aldermen came out to meet him, and the crowds joyfully acclaimed him as "King of England and of France."

Burgundy Joins England.—Henry was not indeed the King of France as yet; but the crown was very soon to be well within his grasp. Yet it was not to the prowess of his arms that he owed this new success. Rather it was due to the fatal disunion of the enemy and the old insensate quarrel between Burgundy and Orleans. In 1418 Henry was over in France again, reducing one by one the strongholds of Normandy, when an event happened which was destined to deliver the country into his hands almost without a blow. Jean sans Peur, the Duke of Burgundy, had hitherto been content to play a waiting game: he had neither openly deserted the national cause, nor yet wholeheartedly supported it; he had sent troops to Agincourt, but he had not gone himself; he had winked at Henry's expedition to Normandy; yet now he viewed its success with some alarm.

The fall of Rouen decided him. He resolved to throw in his lot with the patriot party of the Orleanists, who, since the capture of their Duke, regarded the Dauphin as their natural head. At Montreau, on the upper reaches of the Seine, Burgundy arranged to meet the Dauphin and patch the quarrel up. The two princes, each with a small body of their friends, advanced into the centre of the bridge to parley. Their other retainers were standing back at some distance along the riverside, when on a sudden they saw a scuffle among the group upon the bridge. Shouts were raised and a blow struck, and when the Dauphin and his friends came hurrying back, Jean sans Peur was left lying on the roadway dead. That Jean was himself a murderer must not be forgotten; however treacherously killed he was but paying blood for blood; yet nothing can in reality atone for the tragic blunder of this crime. It

meant that all hopes of French unity were shattered, and, what was worse, it meant an immediate alliance between the Burgundian faction and the enemies of France. The son of the murdered Duke, bent only on revenge, threw his whole weight upon the side of Henry. The effect was immediate. The national resistance collapsed. Paris was open to the English, and in 1420 a treaty was signed at Troyes by which the Dauphin was to be disinherited and cut off from his father's throne; Henry himself was not only to marry the mad King's daughter, but also to become heir to the mad King's crown. Resistance to the combined strength of England and Burgundy was obviously useless, and the Dauphin fled to the loyal provinces of the Loire. That year Henry entered the capital in triumph as France's prospective king.

III

He was never destined himself to wear the crown in Paris, for his death occurred two months before that of the mad King. It remained for his son, then a baby in arms, eventually to wear it; and sure enough, when nine years later he reached the mature age of ten, Henry VI was actually crowned in the Cathedral of Notre Dame; but in the course of those nine years much had happened. Fortune's wheel had by then turned once again, and that coronation, when it came, was a hollow triumph. For during the interval the English had lost the game. Their opportunities had been thrown away; they had roused the old French spirit to defiance, and France had struggled to her feet. The tale of her recovery is the most romantic in her history, for it was all the doing of a girl.

Jeanne D'Arc.—On the child king's accession France lay prostrate and at the conqueror's mercy: John, Duke of Bedford, the King's uncle, was ruling in Paris as his regent, and under Bedford's lead the English were pushing westward; Maine and Touraine were already theirs; the Dauphin was over the Loire, leaving Orleans to its fate. If that stronghold fell, it opened the whole Loire valley to the English; and the siege was now drawing into its seventh month. At this moment there appeared at the Dauphin's court a young peasant girl, some seventeen years of age, in man's attire. Hers was a strange story—though not uncharacteristic of that superstitious age—a story of mysterious lights seen hovering by the well-head near her home, of heavenly voices speaking in her ear and summoning her to be the saviour of her country, of visions in which St. Michael and St. Catherine appeared to strengthen her resolve. From her native place at Domrémy on the borders of Champagne she had travelled across France to bring the Prince this divine message of encouragement and to set herself at the head of the faltering armies of France. Her words were received at first with incredulity, till, rounding upon one rude scoffer, she had warned him to prepare for instant death. Within a few hours the fellow had fallen into a river and was drowned, and after that the girl was treated with

increased respect. Her promise to see the Dauphin safely crowned aroused the hopes even of that languid prince; and eventually she was dispatched to succour the hard-pressed defenders of Orleans.

The appearance of Jeanne d'Arc within the city worked like magic on the spirits of the French. Her undoubted gift of second sight stood her in good stead, and her discovery (at the prompting of a dream) of St. Catherine's sword buried behind the high altar of the Church, gave her an authority to which all bowed. The garrison rallied bravely, and, with the girl in white armour at their head, they flung back the English from their lines. Jeanne's courage was infectious: she took part in every battle, bearing a charmed life; weapons, it seemed, could not wound her, and when the besiegers at length gave up the struggle and retired, they vowed that they had been beaten by a witch. And the "witch" gave them no rest; as they retired northwards, she caught them at Patay, and once more scattering them by a dashing charge, she entered Troyes. So low were the invaders now reduced in spirit and in numbers, that even the Dauphin emerged from his retreat and, under Jeanne's escort, ventured as far as Rheims, the ancient "hallowing place" of the French kings. There, in enemy's country, no more than eighty miles from Paris, where Bedford and the English lay powerless to prevent it, he received at length the crown of France, with the Maid standing by. But with that the Maid's successes ended. She was captured next year by some Burgundian soldiers, and brought to trial at Rouen for black magic. After long cross-questioning about her "voices," and under the threat at any rate of torture, she was forced to recant all her professions and admit her divine mission to be a hoax. Then she was condemned to death and burnt at the stake in the market-place of Rouen. Her judges were mainly Frenchmen; but from first to last it was the English who prompted, as it was the English who carried out, her execution. Yet they knew in their heart of hearts that they were wrong. "We are lost," cried one of the soldiers present at the execution, "for we have burnt a saint." His words were prophetic. The English never again recovered their ascendancy.

Quarrel with Burgundy.—For, though the Maid was dead, the spirit she had aroused in France lived on. The national resistance was now stiffening; nobles and commons, townsfolk and peasants, were beginning to unite, and all now hinged upon the attitude of the Duke of Burgundy. With Burgundy as an ally, the English hold on France might possibly have been retained; without him, the English cause was doomed. The motives of his attachment were the purely selfish motives of revenge; and he would stand by Henry no longer than suited his own book. It needed but one false step—a trifling lack of tact on Bedford's part—to break the bond which held him; and Burgundy's help, which had been won through the accident of a murder, was lost again through the accident of a marriage. It was part of the policy of these times (abroad no less than at home) to secure estates and cement alliances by the intermarriage of great families. Among the other French nobles whose

support the Duke of Bedford coveted was the Count of St. Pol, and with this end in view he had married the Count's sister.¹

This step, seemingly so innocuous, gave great offence to the Duke of Burgundy. St. Pol lay just upon his borders, and he was every whit as anxious as was Bedford to make its Count subservient to himself. He saw in this marriage, therefore, an attempt to defeat his plans. His attitude towards England altered; his friendship cooled; and before long he had actually gone over to the side of the Dauphin and the rest of France. With that all English hopes of final victory vanished. Already in 1431, when the little Henry had received the crown in Paris, the coronation had been palpably a farce; for Henry was no more master of France than he was master of the Pacific Isles. And now, within a few months of Burgundy's desertion, he ceased to be master even of the capital itself. Paris passed with the rest of France into the hands of its lawful King—formerly the Dauphin and now Charles VII. The only foothold remaining to the English was Normandy, and to Normandy they clung tenaciously for another ten years or more. Richard, Duke of York (who assumed the command in France on Bedford's death, and of whom we shall hear again), resisted stoutly all the incursions of the French, and at one time it seemed as if Normandy might have remained England's at the cost of surrendering her other claims. A truce to that effect was even signed by Henry's ministers, who wished for peace; but by the bungling of these same ministers a fresh provocation was offered to the French. They took the excuse gladly, gathered their armies, swept England first from Rouen, then from Caen, and finally in 1450 overwhelmed her army at Formigny. The game was up; England's other ports were surrendered; her garrisons captured or withdrawn. Even Bordeaux fell, never hitherto abandoned since Henry II had it from his wife; and by 1453, except for the Calais garrison, the last English soldier had quitted the soil of France.

France's Progress.—The Hundred Years' War was over. The dreams of conquest had miserably failed, and the claim to the French throne, which Edward III had invented and Henry V revived, was now for ever abandoned. Permanent peace between the two rival countries was, of course, impossible: it was not to be expected. Many a war remained for England to wage with her "sweet enemy," and during the eighteenth century alone, the long series of struggles, which ended at Waterloo, stretched over a century or more. But that struggle was for colonial, not for domestic conquest. The prizes were Calcutta and Quebec, not Paris or Orleans. Henceforward, by a sort of mutual understanding, each nation was to possess its own native soil unchallenged; and England remaining England, and France France, each went its different way.

¹ Humphrey of Gloucester (who was Regent in England as Bedford was in France, and who like Bedford was an uncle of the King) had recently committed a similar indiscretion. He had married a princess of Hainault, which, like St. Pol, adjoined Burgundian territory, and also, like St. Pol, was coveted by the Duke.

And, indeed, those ways were widely different. France used the next half century to nurse her strength and consolidate her power. Charles VII, once so feeble as the Dauphin, proved a strong king. He organised a national army, suppressing free companies and feudal bands. He aimed at concentrating all power in his own hands and centralising the Government of France, as Henry II had long ago done in England. And what Charles VII began was continued and completed by his son, Louis XI. That astute and able monarch spread his web spider-wise over the whole length and breadth of the land. The great feudal provinces—even Burgundy among them—were drawn into his toils. All were made to feel his power, and in the long run all came to bless it. For Louis restored prosperity to the towns and cultivation to the fields. He encouraged industries, revived markets, instituted fairs, and improved the high roads and the means of transit; so that under his rule France grew young again, and, throwing off the fatal influences of her old disunion, stepped once more into the forefront of the nations.

England in the second half of the fifteenth century presents another picture of a less happy sort. Endless dissensions racked her; and it seemed as though she was sickening of the very malady from which France had just recovered. Princes quarrelled and the leading nobility took sides, ranging themselves under this leader or that. The crown was the centre of dispute, and the royal power changed hands with a bewildering rapidity. Henry VI, when he became of age to rule, had not the character to hold the realm together; and he, the third Lancastrian, was made to suffer bitterly for the fatal precedent the first had set. When Henry Bolingbroke dethroned King Richard, he had pointed the way to successful usurpation, and now under his feeble grandson the experiment was to be repeated. Failure abroad was followed by anarchy at home; a war-loving aristocracy and a large number of professional veterans could not rest long without employment; and the Hundred Years' War was barely over when the Wars of the Roses began.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RISE OF THE HOUSE OF YORK

I

Henry VI and His Rival.—The loss of Normandy was perhaps no great misfortune to King Henry VI. To hold down a conquered country is never an easy or a pleasant task; and Henry's whole strength would very soon be needed to meet troubles nearer home. Nevertheless, failure begets failure, and Henry's coming troubles were in a sense directly due to the collapse of his armies in France. For some forty years or more the people of England had been buoyed up by the enticing dreams of conquest. The thrill of Agincourt and the early success of Henry V

had served at any rate to keep them quiet, if not perhaps contented. But now that the dream was shattered and the excitement over, there followed the inevitable relapse. Discontent grew rife; men looked for a scapegoat, and blame naturally fell upon the king's favourite ministers who had been so ready to conclude the shameful, though necessary, peace. There were many eager to denounce them, but the chief spokesman of the discontent was the former commander of the army in Normandy, Richard, Duke of York.

It was an evil day for King Henry when this royal cousin turned against him; for Richard was something more than an opponent: he was a rival to the throne. He too could trace his pedigree to Edward III, so that, if the royal blood flowed in the Lancastrian line, it flowed in York's no less. The sons of Edward III had been four in number. The Black Prince, Lionel, John of Gaunt, and Edmund—this was the order of their birth. Through the murder of King Richard, the Black Prince's son, the throne had gone to Gaunt's line, the three Lancastrian Henries, and the third was even now upon it. But the families of Lionel and of Edmund had in neither case died out: on the contrary, they had eventually been linked by an intermarriage, and the son of that marriage was none other than Richard, Duke of York. Now, which of the two had a better title to the throne—Richard, as the descendant of these two brothers, or the King, as descendant of their middle brother, Gaunt—might have been a nice question for dispute; but in point of character, at least, there could be no question whatsoever. The Duke was infinitely the better man.

For Henry VI was in truth but a poor creature.¹ His father, we must remember, had married the daughter of the mad French king; and Henry, as the child of that marriage, had inherited the fatal taint, and, with increasing years, the trouble grew. His case was very similar to his grandfather's. Normally sane, though always weak and moody, he fell at intervals into a sort of melancholy madness. When in 1453 he was thus seized, he became quite helpless: he could neither speak nor recognise his friends. He suffered unutterable things at the hands of the royal physicians; was poulticed and shaved, drugged and bled, till it was enough indeed to drive him mad; and mad he still remained. Incapable of government, he needed a regent. One man was obvious: all pointed to the Duke of York, and the Duke of York took the post. The Duke was a moderate man. He expected to get the crown on Henry's death, and with that certainty in prospect he would have been well content to wait, but that this very year an event occurred which was a deathblow to all his hopes. The queen, hitherto childless, gave birth to a son and heir. York saw that, wait as he might, he could never now be king. The future lay in his own hands, and the sooner he struck the better. Even had he himself been loth to act, there were those who urged him on. Chief among these was the great Earl of Warwick, head

¹ It should, perhaps, be said to Henry's credit that he followed in Wykeham's steps by founding a school and a college—Eton and King's College, Cambridge.

of the Neville family—the most powerful in all England. There was royal blood among the Nevilles, and their property was immense. By a series of prudent matches, this house had gathered to itself, like some great snowball, a fabulous number of honours, titles, and estates. So it came about that Richard Neville, besides being Earl of Warwick, was Earl also of Newburgh and Aumarle, Baron of Stanley and Hanslape, Lord of Glamorgan and Morgannoc. He held the De Spenser lands in Wales and the Beauchamp lands in Gloucester; and his manors, scattered through a score of counties, numbered 150 at the least. To have such a man for friend meant more than a whole host of armed retainers; and Warwick was ready to back York through thick and thin.

The Queen's Excesses.—Against such a combination, King Henry, in his half-demented state, seemed helpless as a child. Yet nothing is more astounding in the years which followed than the dogged obstinacy with which his cause was fought. Defeated, his armies rallied and won back lost ground. Driven into exile, he invariably managed to return: and nothing but his death could permanently rob him of the throne. The true cause of this extraordinary resilience was the brave and determined spirit of Margaret, his queen. Nothing could suppress or daunt that wonderful woman. Despair had no meaning for her; and no sooner was she beaten than she plotted to turn the tables once again. Yet her very qualities carried their curse along with them. She would stick at nothing to attain her ends. The extremest measures of intimidation and revenge, plunder and devastation, sack of towns and brutal executions, were a part of the game she played; and it was her outrageous conduct of the war more than anything else which undid again the Lancastrians' brief successes as soon as they were won. Three times, as we shall see, the Yorkist claimant was driven out of power, and three times again he was enabled to return, because England could not tolerate the violence of his foes.

The first of these occasions was in 1459. York, Warwick, and their friends had risen in open rebellion against the King, but without success. Their army had been scattered. York had fled to Ireland, Warwick to Calais; but their exile did not last, and their best ally was the savage temper of the Queen. She could use no moderation in her victory: she had Midland boroughs plundered and London burghers hanged for having favoured York, and such conduct soon roused the south against her. Feeling was high when Warwick, seizing the chance, came back from Calais. London and the southerners rallied to him. He beat the royalists at Northampton, drove the Queen into ignominious flight, and made a prisoner of the King. York was brought back from Ireland, and, Warwick forbidding him to take the crown, he became Regent once again.

Edward of York.—But this first Lancastrian failure was only the prelude to a fiercer struggle. Though the south and east had turned against the Queen, the north and west were still faithful to her cause. There, among the powerful border earls, she gathered fresh troops, and,

before many months were out, she was on the warpath again. Her forces caught the main enemy at Wakefield, and crushed them utterly. Many Yorkist leaders fell, and, what is more important, the Duke Richard himself was left dead on the field. The Lancastrian army, flushed by this success, swept down towards London. At St. Albans they met Warwick and scattered his army too. The capital seemed already within their grasp: the gates were actually open for surrender; but, while they dallied, a fresh enemy appeared upon the scene. York himself was dead, but his young son, Edward, was alive, and a brilliant soldier too, and he it was, not Margaret or King Henry, who, in the nick of time, slipped through the open gates. The Lancastrians, disappointed, withdrew to the north, plundering, burning, and rousing bitter hatred as they went. Edward followed at their heels, gathering support from the outraged Midlanders; and, when his army came up with the enemy at Towton near York, it was in a mood for fierce revenge. There, upon a bleak hill-top in driving snow, was fought as bitter and bloody a fight as English battlefield has ever witnessed. The Lancastrian chiefs were slaughtered almost to a man. The King and Queen fled to Scotland; and the young Edward, now Duke of York in his dead father's stead, was free to take the crown. His father in a like case had held his hand. But there was no such scruple in the son, and the second act of this bewildering drama closed upon his coronation as King Edward IV.

The third act opened with a scene which did little credit to the King thus newly crowned. Warwick, now called the King-maker, was busy in the north and west, reducing all to order, winning back one by one Lancastrian fortresses, completing the work of victory. And, meanwhile, the young man for whom he laboured, and on whom in very fact he had bestowed the crown, was idling away his time in feasting and hunting and the pleasures of the Court. There is small wonder that the two friends soon fell out. The rift was caused by Edward's imprudent selection of his queen. The young King was now secretly afraid of the great King-maker, and, anxious to secure some counterpoise to Warwick's influence, he married the daughter of another English earl. Warwick was furious that he had not been consulted; he too had daughters of his own, and if Edward's wife was to be an English lady, his was the premier claim. The breach thus caused soon widened. Warwick fell into disgrace, plotted, revolted, and, failing to hold his own, went over to the enemy's camp. He and Queen Margaret together succeeded in driving Edward out, and for a few months replaced the miserable Henry once more upon the throne. So, for the third time, the Lancastrians were in power again; but this was their last success, and it was brief. Over in France, whither he had fled, Edward had found men and money to support his cause. In 1471 he was back again. He beat the Lancastrians decisively at Barnet, where fell their new ally, Warwick the King-maker. He beat what remained of them again at Tewkesbury, where he made a prisoner of the Queen. The old King Henry, whom he had caught at London, he determined to remove, and

got his brother, Richard of Gloucester, to perform the deed. The House of Lancaster being thus practically extinct, Edward could breathe more freely; and with this last murder the blood-letting was ended. And it was time. Never has civil war been waged in England in so pitiless a fashion, and in the universal butchery both parties had borne its share. There is not much to choose between them. It was by murder that the Lancastrian family had risen to the throne, and it was the murderous spirit in which they waged the war that effectually ruined their chances of success. But, whatever may be said for the early leaders of the rival house, its later record is very far from clean; and for the ugliest crimes of mean treachery or sinister intrigue we must look to these two Yorkist brothers, King Edward and Richard of Gloucester.

We need not dwell long upon their story. The twelve years still remaining to Edward were by contrast uneventful, and, for his subjects at any rate, not unhappy. There was no more killing, for there was no one left to kill. Taxation was light, for the King had plenty, having stripped the Lancastrians bare. Edward lived almost wholly for his pleasures, and, as years went on, sank deeper and deeper into debauchery and vice. Occasionally he would bestir himself: once to offer a futile challenge to the King of France, and again when he grew suspicious of his brother George, Duke of Clarence. That young man's fate was quickly settled: he was thrown into the Tower and there, according to the popular though doubtful story, drowned by his own choice in a butt of Malmsey wine. For the rest, Edward left the chief conduct of affairs to his younger brother above-mentioned, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Gloucester bears perhaps the most evil name in English history: he is Shakespeare's worst villain; and tradition has made of him a hideous humpbacked dwarf. He was certainly brave, and held some reputation as a fighter. He was with equal certainty a bad, unwholesome man; and when Edward died, worn out by self-indulgence, and left behind him two sons, mere boys, under the protection of the Queen their mother, there were signs of something more than a merely friendly interest in the ominous attentions of their wicked uncle.

Richard the Third.—The Queen (it was she whose marriage with Edward had given the King-maker so much offence) was no match for the wiles of Richard of Gloucester. The younger of her boys she managed to keep beside her. But the elder boy, to whom the crown rightfully belonged, was taken under Gloucester's wing; and, pending the summons of Parliament which should declare his nephew King, Gloucester assumed the task of governing as his Regent. This was in April; and Richard did not long delay his second stroke. In June, before a gathering of the Privy Council, he boldly accused the Queen of witchcraft—declared she had been practising Black Arts upon him; and as a proof of the charge he unbared his withered left arm, a deformity which all knew to have existed since his childhood. Then without more ado he demanded the punishment of the Queen and her supporters. At a signal armed men entered: the Queen's friends on the Council were

arrested, and one at least was beheaded on the spot. The Queen herself, who had taken sanctuary at Westminster with her younger son, was compelled to give him up, and the lad was housed in the Tower along with his elder brother, whom public opinion still fondly regarded as the King. As, however, the day fixed for the Coronation Parliament approached, the plot began to thicken. A sermon was preached at St. Paul's Cross by one of the Duke's men in which the legality of the Queen's marriage with King Edward was openly called in question. This paved the way; and when, a few days later, Parliament assembled, Gloucester's trump card was played. Declaring that the aforesaid marriage had been improperly performed, in an unconsecrated place, and without due authority of Church, he swore that the Queen's son had no right whatever to the throne of England, and claimed it for himself. London at the time was packed with armed Yorkist soldiery: Parliament, cowed into submission, uttered no word of protest, and Richard of Gloucester had his way. He was accepted, and received the crown with the title of Richard III. Yet, even so, some sense of insecurity remained; and one night in August of that year the two young Princes disappeared mysteriously from their cell. The secret of their fate was well kept, and nobody but Richard and their gaolers knew what had become of them. Two centuries later some masons working in the Tower discovered the two skeletons buried beneath a staircase. So the crime was proved; yet, even in Richard's own day, there was not a man who doubted for a moment that the guilt was his.

Richard reaped as he had sowed; and his reign of two short years was a series of misfortunes. First one friend and then another turned against him. Plots and conspiracies abounded. His only son died and left him heirless; and then, to complete the tale, his wife died also, and men declared that he had poisoned her. Richard denied the charge and, by whatever means he could, endeavoured to stem the rising disaffection. He punished ruthlessly, and one Wiltshire gentleman was hanged for writing a humorous rhyme about the King. But these efforts were in vain: nobody loved him, and there was one at hand in whose power it lay to bring relief to the distracted country, and to heal in his own person the fatal feud which had so long divided England between Lancaster and York. Henry V's French wife had married at her husband's death a Welshman, Owen Tudor. Their son in turn married a Lancastrian lady; and so it came about that their grandson, bearing, too, the familiar Lancastrian name of Henry, was now the last survivor of the House of Gaunt. But that was not all, for this Henry Tudor was betrothed to a Yorkist lady, sister of the two princes murdered in the Tower. By such a marriage he was destined, as it were, to merge the two rival Houses into one and to display the White Rose and the Red Rose quartered side by side upon his arms. Henry Tudor was now in exile, but in 1485 he reappeared. Landing in Wales, he drew the Welshmen to him for his Tudor blood and with a force, small indeed but eager, confronted King Richard's host at Bosworth Field. Numbers,

however, counted little on that day. Many of Richard's supposed allies never fought. A rout set in, and, seeing all was lost, Richard—a brave man to the end—plunged into the *mêlée* and was killed. After the fight his battered crown was discovered hanging on a thorn bush. They carried it to the victorious leader, and placing it on his head, proclaimed him Henry VII.

II

Character of the War.—So ended the terrible and futile struggle of the Roses, terrible because of the passions it aroused, and because the atrocities to which it led surpassed in horror those of all civil wars before or since; futile because no principle of nationality or creed or class was here at stake. It was not even, as were the early wars, an effort of the baronage to curb the pretensions of the King. Its leaders on either side were mere self-seekers, royal princelings or ambitious earls, overswollen with pride of wealth or lust of power; and the only useful outcome of their fierce encounter was that by mutual slaughter they rid the country of much of their dangerous power. The Tudors reigned more securely because the old feudal nobility had thus committed political suicide upon the field of battle.¹ Nor was there here any such question of privilege or freedom as brought on the war against King Charles I. The country as a whole was apathetic, and looked on with little interest at the quarrel, seeing nothing to be gained by an exchange of crowns. As for the soldiers who fought the battles of the Roses, they were not even the feudal liegemen of the party chiefs. They were mercenary “retainers,” hired, like the Free Companies in the French wars, by individual captains. They fought upon condition of receiving food and clothing, a little pay perhaps, and, in the more distant prospect, plunder. The nobler instincts of even local patriotism and loyalty were lost; and the sole concern which the normal Englishman displayed throughout the struggle was to keep out of it. No single town cared enough for either party to stand a siege on its behalf. When on one or two occasions there were genuine outbursts of national excitement, these were due to anger at the Lancastrian excesses: and Towton was simply the revenge of the more civilised southerners upon the freebooters from the north. Apart from that the townsfolk and country folk meddled little in the fighting, and went their ways to buy or sell, plough their fields or weave their wool, as though nothing much was happening. The truth is, that Englishmen were beginning at last to live their lives in their own way, and to be proudly independent of the authority of their chiefs: they had taken a step forward out of the feudal age.

Enclosures and Sheep-Farming.—The fifteenth century, indeed, saw many important changes spread over the country-side. Feudalism

¹ At the accession of Henry VII, so many peers were either minors or in exile that some historians have been led into supposing the actual number of the peerage to have been diminished by the wars. This was not the case.

was fast perishing: the Black Death and the Peasants' Rising had killed it. The old-fashioned "manor" over which the local "lord" was petty king, commanding the allegiance, ordering the very lives of all who held land from him, was soon to be a thing of the past. Instead of the "tied" villein, we now find the free labourer working for a wage, and

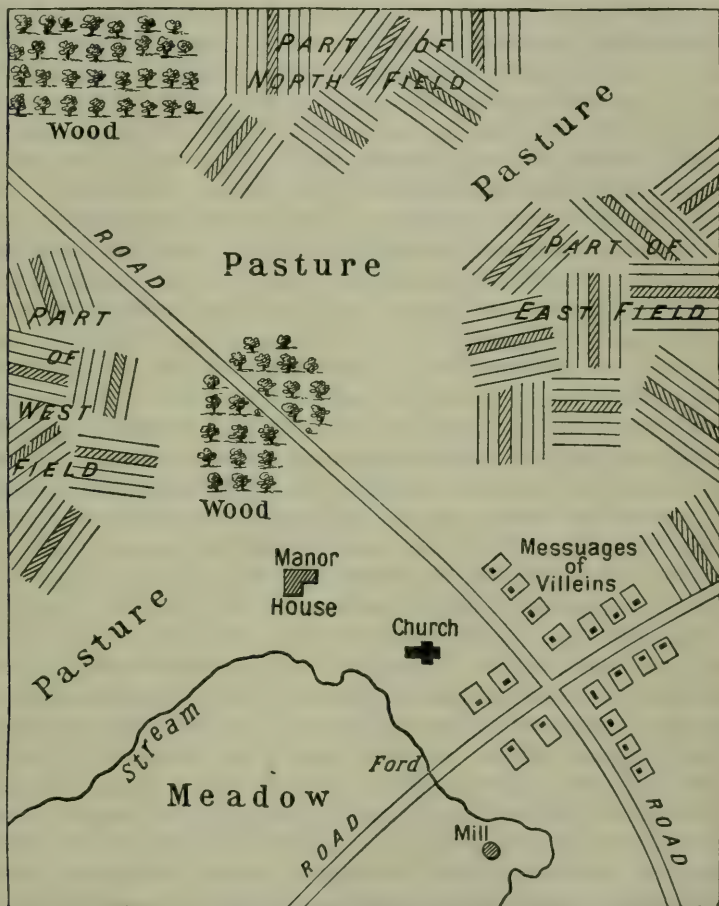


FIG. 19.—PLAN OF A MEDIEVAL MANOR.

The holding of one villein is shaded in each field.

directly dependent upon no man. The more prosperous of them had become yeoman farmers, owning their miniature estates, and passing them down by legal right from the father to the son. The number of such small holdings was increasing; and this fact of itself brought in a change which was to transform the very aspect of the landscape. Hitherto, each villager, were he villein or freeman, had held possession only over scattered strips of tillage, a hide in this corner and a hide in

that. There was a sort of justice and equality in such a distribution which made not a little for good-fellowship: and in the working of the strips there had been much mutual give and take among the villagers. They would lend a hand to carry each other's harvest, and borrow a neighbour's horse to cart their hay. As often as not, there would be a "village plough," which went the round from one man's strip to another's; and equally there was "Common Land" on the outskirts of the tillage which was free to all, and on which every villager could graze his beasts at will. We must imagine the country therefore as one endless rolling plain—such a plain as may nowadays still be seen upon the Continent—bare of hedges, fences, and suchlike obstacles, resembling rather the chequer of an allotment garden, plot beside plot, and strip by strip, though on a much larger scale. During the fifteenth century, however, all this began to change. The independent yeoman, priding himself upon his new-won independence, would prefer a little compact farm to these scattered unmanageable strips. He therefore endeavoured to mass his fields together; bought an odd corner from a neighbour here, exchanged an outlying strip for one more central, "borrowed" a little maybe from the Common Land. And then, to mark the boundaries of his small estate, he would set up a fence or plant a hedge; and very soon his neighbour did the same; the habit of demarcation grew; so country hedges began to bristle forth over the whole length and breadth of England, and the country, as the term is, was gradually "enclosed."

There was further one manifest advantage in this "enclosure" system. Since the Black Death had rendered labour scarce, it had become more popular than ever to keep sheep and cattle, simply because it took fewer men to supervise the grazing than to till the land. Now, as men soon saw, nothing was easier than to hedge or fence a field, put cattle into it, and leave them to themselves. This tempted all landowners, rich and poor alike, to set aside a portion of their land as pasture: they were even tempted to do more than this and to encroach upon the Common Land; so, as time went on, and especially under the Tudors, pieces of that, too, were similarly "enclosed" by those who perhaps had little right to do so. Sheep-farming became increasingly the fashion. The trade in wool grew with it; and, as was natural, the manufacture of cloth, left hitherto to the Flemings of Ghent or Bruges, became a staple industry in many English towns. England was in fact beginning to develop along new lines. No longer content to be in the main an agricultural country, she was to take a special pride in the skill of her craftsmen and the wealth of her great merchants. She was to gain a new prosperity and strength from her power to turn out goods, and so at last to earn her honourable title—honourable, though Napoleon himself first bestowed it with a sneer—as a nation of shopkeepers.

Craftsmen's Guilds.—Shopkeepers naturally congregate together; trade and industries mean towns, and already long years before this the English towns had been growing in size, number and importance. They were of many sorts: there were the harbour towns like Bristol

and Southampton, and the famous Cinque Ports (which were really more than five) on the Kent and Sussex coast, Hythe, Romney, Hastings, Sandwich, Dover, Winchelsea and Rye. There were old historic capitals, like Winchester and York; there were towns that had gathered round a fortress, like Nottingham and Derby; others, like Bury St. Edmunds, that sprang up in the neighbourhood of some great monastic house. Finally, with the growth of trade, many of the old towns, as well as many new ones, took on a fresh importance, becoming centres of manufacture or barter. Lancashire coal-pits were not then dreamt of; and the south being ahead of the north in skill and enterprise, the towns there were more plentiful and prosperous. Again, the growth of the weaving industry, of which mention was made above, had, too, a remarkable effect on various districts. Norfolk and Suffolk in the east, and the Cotswold country in the west, were the chief centres of this industry (as Yorkshire and Lancashire are the chief industrial centres of to-day); and, while an ancient capital like Norwich very naturally became the central market for such goods, other smaller towns, where weavers gathered, multiplied and thrived. How great was their prosperity we may shrewdly guess when we consider the fine churches their citizens erected, often ten times too big for the inhabitants to-day, and when we consider the stately fabric of the town-halls and private mansions which merchants and wool-staplers built for their own use.

Each of these towns had its individual history, more lively and eventful than the slow-paced humdrum development of the country-side. In quite early days most of them had secured their "freedom" and evolved a constitution of their own. The right to trade, the conditions of their taxation, the privilege of managing their own affairs had been defined for them by a "Charter," purchased or extorted from the King. Each town would have its mayor, its aldermen (or elders), its officers of police, its bailiffs, beadles, town-crier, and town-clerk. Interference, whether from the King or others, was much resented by the citizens of these "free" towns; and often they had a hard fight of it to hold their own against the pretensions of some local magnate, were he a powerful earl or, scarcely less powerful, a bishop of the Church. In the long run, however, their efforts were in general rewarded by success, and in one way or another the townsmen developed strong organisations for the protection of their interests. Each craft or trade, for example, was organised into what we should call a "Society" or "Union," but known in the Middle Ages by the name of Guild. A Guild would perhaps originally be formed to provide a common chest or fund out of which the members might be maintained if they fell sick, or given a decent funeral if they died. Gradually, however, the Guild began to take under its care the whole organisation of the handicraft or trade in which its members were employed. This was comparatively easy, because the members of a trade were in those days accustomed to hang close together. Often they would be grouped in a single street or quarter of the town. Shoe Lane, for instance, would be occupied by the

cobblers; Bread Street, by the bakers; and so forth; and in most of England's old towns street names betraying such an origin still survive.

Guild Regulations.—Thanks to this contiguity the craftsmen's Guilds, when they arose, were able to form a compact united group and to exercise a strict control over their members. Their first concern, as with the Trades' Unions of to-day, was to protect the interests of the group. The Cobblers' Guild, since it would include all the cobblers in the town, was able to regulate the sale of boots and shoes, to see that a fair price was asked and paid for them, and to see that no single cobbler should attempt to undersell his fellows. Equally was the Guild in duty bound to uphold the honour of the trade by preventing bad workmanship and by punishing attempts to cheat. Strict rules were made against adulteration, such as that of the London pewterers' in 1348, "No one shall make privily vessels of lead or of false alloy for sending out of the City to fairs, etc.; but let the things be shown that be so sent to the wardens before they go out." To the same intent great care was taken that nobody should set up as a pewterer or cobbler, or whatever it might be, until he were adequately trained and could do full credit to the trade. "No journeyman," says the rule of the cutlers, "who has not served his apprenticeship in the City, or otherwise served seven years in the City in such a trade, shall be admitted to the work, if he have not first been tried by the overseers to ascertain how much he is deserving to take." The terms of apprenticeship were very strict, and until a boy or man had signed his indenture to a master, paid his fee, and served his time, he was not entitled to do business on his own. All this was, of course, much to the advantage of the buying public, who were hereby secured against the sale of shoddy or inferior goods. But there were also times when the Guilds were tempted to put up the prices to an unfair level, thus compelling the citizens to take measures for their self-defence. So we find the Mayor very frequently—and in rarer cases even the King himself—intervening to fix the rate of prices at a reasonable standard. Under Henry II the weight of the farthing loaf was fixed by law. John took similar action regarding ale. This led, of course, to numerous disputes, and there were attempts to evade the law. Sometimes the bakers would go on strike; sometimes a tradesman would attempt to profiteer. Cases, set on record, have come down to us. "The wife of Hildy, the poulterer," says one, "was committed to prison for that, against the proclamation of the Mayor, she had sold four wood-cocks for 20 pence"; and she was only released upon an express promise to amend her ways. Other "tricks of the trade" were punished in less pleasant fashion. One, Robert Porter, who, knowing that the loaf he sold was under weight, had "fraudulently inserted a piece of iron weighing about 6 ounces with intent to make the said loaf weigh more, to the deceit of the people," was put in pillory with his hands and head stuck through the holes in a board, and "the said loaf and piece of iron was hung round his neck."

Besides such differences between Guildsmen and the town authori-

ties, there was often, very naturally, a clash of interest between Guild and Guild, which led to jealousies, disputes, and even open fighting. Not that such disputes were on a large scale, or in any way similar to the disputes which now arise between employers and Trade Unions. In the first place, the employers themselves were in those days members of the Guild, and often worked as master-craftsmen side by side with their employees and apprentices, so that there was seldom anything but loyalty and good fellowship between the master and the man. In the second place, the operation of the Guild was confined to its native town: there were few or no dealings between the craft guilds of one town and another. So disputes, when they arose, concerned the inhabitants of the place alone, and were settled by the local authorities with an eye to the interests of their own small community. So it is that some modern writers have thought that this was the Golden Age of trade and industry, an age when men had not yet learnt the suicidal violence and distrust of modern competition, and when all were ready to co-operate in a common patriotism to their native town, sinking their private differences for the good of their neighbours and their fellow-citizens.

Merchant Guilds.—Nevertheless, there was one class of Guild which was very apt to tyrannise over the rest. These were the Guilds of Merchants, naturally the most powerful, partly because they were the richest, partly because by birth and station their members were mostly influential men. It was not uncommon, therefore, for these Merchant Guilds to take the control of the town government altogether into their hands. Men have always looked to the wealthy for a lead; and the merchants could often get themselves elected aldermen for life and so monopolise the corporation. Even short of that they could easily find the means to bring the others to their way of thinking. As traders, they invariably would have the whip-hand of the humbler artisan. Their Guilds, at any rate, if not the others, were in touch with traders in neighbouring towns, and even in foreign countries. They could act in concert, and arrange together what prices should be paid to the craftsmen for their goods. This was often a lower price than was altogether fair, and the craftsmen not unnaturally resented the great merchants' greed. At the time of the Peasants' Rising, a stand of some sort was made against them, and many unpopular merchants shared the tragic fate which befell some landowners at the peasants' hands.

Yet, in the long run, even the Merchant Guilds were no enemies to freedom; and the towns had always showed a stubborn resistance to tyranny and wrong, whether under Henry III, when they took de Montfort's side, or in the Wars of the Roses, when they refused to tolerate the behaviour of the Queen; and these powerful companies played, on the whole, a creditable part in the making of English history. They were not afraid to stand out against the King over questions of privilege or taxation; and they could command a hearing by their money, by their influence, and, if need were, by something more. As time went on, they too had armed; they had formed military contingents of their own;

they kept a whole armoury of weapons stored against emergencies in the Guild Hall; and when, in due course, the day came to strike a blow for liberty against the King's oppression, they were ready. It was the towns that were the undoing of Charles Stuart: and their strength, which was so decisive, was not, we may be sure, built up in a day or a year. While the peasants were still struggling to shake off the yoke of feudalism, and be quit of their lords and masters, the towns had long since learnt to bow their necks to no man, but to manage their own affairs. The love of liberty grows with the use of it; and it was this long experience in self-government that bred in the citizens and Guildsmen¹ that unique spirit of sturdy independence which has laid the foundations of English democracy.

Meanwhile, when Henry VII ascended the throne, town and country alike desired nothing so much as peace—peace abroad and peace at home. Henry gave them both; and in the quiet years that followed the English people were slowly building up, by steady workmanship and a widening trade, the wealth and prosperity which were to lift them again into the forefront of the nations under the strong rule of the House of Tudor.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MIDDLE AGES

The Middle Ages are over and done with; but who shall say that they are understood? No history book can do more than trace a bare outline and lift, as it were, but a corner of the curtain. It can record the facts, set down the outstanding names, and catalogue the dates; but how little can it conjure up the living spirit of past ages or reveal to our eyes that true character of those who lived in them. Such and such words, we may tell ourselves, King Henry spoke. Here, we may say, the Archbishop fell and died. But how these men thought and felt, the ground of their faith and their antagonism, the actual workings of their inner mind, all these remain conjecture. There is but one key wherewith to unlock the secrets of the past. We can read the thoughts of former generations only in those material records which they themselves have left behind. Their minds must be interpreted for us by direct study of their art, their songs, their writings, of the architecture of their houses and their churches, the ritual of their religious services, the arms they fought with, the furniture they used, even the fashion of the clothes they wore—things upon which, while perhaps they thought it least, they set the indelible impress of their very selves.

If then we are to have any true understanding of the Middle Ages,

¹ By the beginning of the seventeenth century the Guilds had in point of fact decayed and almost vanished; but the towns' spirit of independence was the same.



HENRY V



HENRY VII

we must seek it thus at first hand; and, though the men of those days were not perhaps great writers, we shall turn most naturally to the few books which remain to us from them.

Froissart's Chronicle.—Now chronicles, it must be confessed, are for the most part musty reading, being written, as a rule, in the crabbed style of degenerate monkish Latin; but to this rule there are exceptions. One such is Froissart, the courtly French wanderer who spent his life in the service of many royal masters (the Black Prince himself among them), and to whom we owe the history of England's glorious wars with France. Gay, genial, gossiping Froissart is none of your dull conscientious chroniclers; he dwells with an inimitable gusto on every detail which may take his fancy, whether it be that cave in Ireland known as St. Patrick's Purgatory, into which, when men descended, "a certain hot vapour rose against them and strake so into their heads that they were fain to sit down on the stairs which were of stone; and after they had sat there a season, they had great desire to sleep and slept there all night"; or were it again the volume of his works which he showed the King of England, "fair illumined and written, and covered with crimson velvet, with ten buttons of silver and gilt, and roses of gold in the midst, with two great clasps gilt, richly wrought." Froissart looked at the works of man and nature with a true poet's eye: every line of him breathes with the reckless jollity of a world still young and ardent. A well-fought battle fills him with "pleasure and delight," and all war's horrors are redeemed for him by the beauty and romance of mediæval knighthood. His book is the true knight's testament; he is the high-priest of perfect chivalry; and it was not for nothing that he was born a native of the most chivalrous of countries, France.

Malory.—Yet England, too, produced her Froissart, fit also to immortalise his country's spirit in a great romance. Malory was his name, and his book the "*Mort d'Arthur*." The legend of the Round Table is not indeed history proper; but, if in this beautiful fairy-tale of gallantry and love Malory has somewhat transfigured and ennobled the ideals of his time, he was only therein following and perfecting a tradition already centuries old. The story had been often told by Geoffrey of Monmouth and many others when Malory retold it in his own matchless fifteenth-century prose; but he lifted it on to a higher plane and surrounded it with an undying glamour. The very titles of the chapters call us, as Andrew Lang has said, into the region of romance: "How Sir Launcelot came to the Chapel Perilous and gat there of a dead corpse a piece of cloth and a sword"; "How the damsel and Beaumains came to the siege and to the sycamore tree, and there Beaumains blew a horn and then the Knight of the Red Lands came to fight him." But though such words sound like a summons to an elfin and outlandish world, yet Malory is no dreamer: his tales are simple, strong, and real, more manly than Tennyson's somewhat sentimental Idylls, more true to life than the fanciful allegories of Spenser's "*Faerie Queene*." They take us straight to the heart of the Middle Ages and reveal to us, as

nothing else can, the best and noblest side of an age which conceived the beautiful ideal of Christian chivalry.

Chaucer.—But not all Frenchmen or Englishmen could be knight errants; and there are the humbler folk to think of. To complete the picture and appreciate the character of the normal citizen, we must look elsewhere than to Malory or Froissart. Happily, we shall not look in vain. In 1400, the very year when Malory was born, there died one who was great in poetry as he in prose. Geoffrey Chaucer, though himself a soldier in the French wars of Edward III and at all times a special favourite at the Court, was not one who confined his pen to the deeds of lords and princes or to knightly tales of war. He was what no Frenchman perhaps could then have been, a natural democrat—one who moved on easy terms of familiarity among men of every class, and who was as much at home in a wayside tavern as in the company of the great. Chaucer was hail-fellow-well-met with all and sundry, and in his “*Tales of the Canterbury Pilgrims*” he has brought together as mixed a company as ever gather round the table of an inn. Knight and miller, parson and peasant, prioress and doctor, cook and merchant and ship’s captain all take their drinks together, make their pilgrimage together, and tell their various tales together, as though distinctions of class or privilege or wealth did not exist. We to-day can scarcely imagine such complete unconsciousness of any social barrier; but Chaucer brings home to us, as no one else can do, what men meant in the Middle Ages when they made boast of English “freedom.” Of the characters to which his prologue introduces us, some are good folk, many somewhat blasphemous, a few downright bad; but all alike breathe the self-same spirit—a sturdy independence that knows neither how to truckle nor how to condescend, and a bluff good-natured geniality that accepts a fellow-man at his true worth. About the life and manners of these various folk there is much evidence to be gleaned from Chaucer’s racy sketches. He is a shrewd, though kindly, judge of human character. He apportions praise and blame with an even hand—blame to the friar, a wanton merry fellow, too easy by half with the “pardons” he dispenses; praise to the poor honest parson, model, if ever man was, of what a priest should be:

He waited after no pomp and reverence,
Nor maked him a spiced conscience,
But Christés love, and His apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he followed it himselve.

The prioress, too, is a worthy and delightfully human character. She kept “small hounds,” to which she was devotedly attached; and her table manners were so good that they call forth special note:

At meate well y-taught was she withal
She let no morsel from her lippes fall.
Nor wet her fingers in her sauce deep.
Well could she carry a morsel and well keep
That no droppe ne fell upon her breaste. . . .
Her over-lippe wiped she so clean
That in her cuppe was no farthing seen
Of grease. . . .

The monk also kept his hounds; but of him it is less easy to approve:

... he was a pricasour aright: [hunter]
Grey-hounds he had, as swift as fowl in flight;
Of priking and of hunting for the hare [hard riding]
Was all his lust; for no cost would he spare.

But Chaucer was a man of broad sympathies and he is slow to condemn. He appreciates all sides of human character. He cannot forbear from dwelling with obvious admiration upon the miller's great brute strength: -

Full big he was of brawn and eke of bones;
That proved well, for over all ther he cam,
At wrestling he would have alway the ram.
He was short-shouldered, broad, a thick knarre [churl]
There was no door that he nolde heave of harre [hinge]
Or break it at a running with his head.

And equally we may detect in him a kindly fellow-feeling for the poor "clerk" of Oxenford:

For him was liefer have at his bed's head
Twenty books clad in black and red,
Of Aristotle and his philosophy,
Than robes rich or fiddle or gay psaltry.

But however minute and faithful the detail of these pictures, perhaps the chief impression which we get from them is general rather than particular. We seem to see in bold true outline the Englishman as he was known to the men of Chaucer's day, the Englishman who fought at the battles of Crecy and Poitiers, who listened to John Ball's revolutionary sermons and perhaps read John Wycliffe's Bible on the sly, yet lost his head over neither. He was a queer mixture then, as always, free and easy in his manners, yet not without a certain inbred courtesy, a voracious feeder, but, as host, generous to a fault, a great talker too, humorous, coarse, and witty by turns, a trifle sentimental in his passions, but a shrewd hard-headed man of business when need was, possessing on the whole an even temper, unlimited pluck, a taste for fine clothes, and an undisguised conviction of his own importance. There may have been happier and more prosperous times than his, but, despite all the changes and chances of that stirring age, it was unmistakably a proud and a merry England of which Chaucer wrote.

Mediæval Architecture.—But from chronicles and poems it is time to turn to monuments more durable and scarcely (if read aright) less significant than they. The buildings of the period have also their tale to tell. Mediæval castles, it is true, are mostly laid in ruins; and it must take something of a student's eye to reconstruct their fallen fabric and call up in imagination the battles which were waged under their walls. But the churches still stand, and from these we may learn much of the people's character, which books can hardly tell. Architecture is an index of men's aspirations and ideals: and the history of religious

architecture is nothing less than a mirror of English national development. First comes the period of the Norman rule, and for a hundred years or more after the Conquest England is filled with the massive masonry of those Norman churches which still stand so proud and firmly rooted to the present day—type of the men themselves who set them up—semi-circular arches supported on thick sturdy pillars and roughly hewn with half-barbarous zigzag patterns round their edge; walls of immense solidity, pierced with narrow-mouthed, round-headed windows like the loopholes in a fort; above all, and dominating all, the square, squat central tower, more fitted, one would say, to cap a fortress than a church. So four generations of a fighting race built to God's glory,

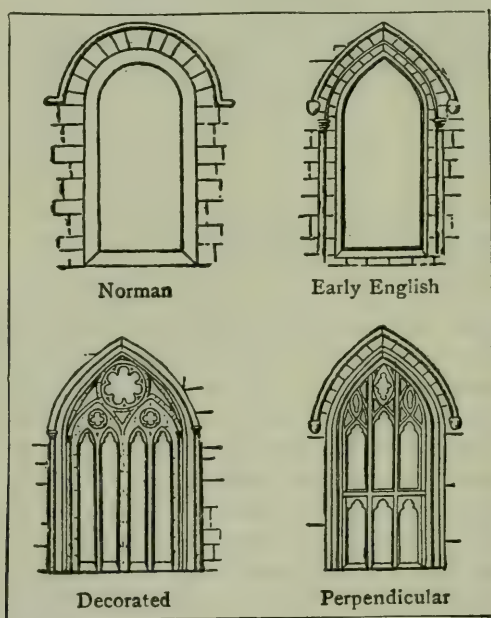


FIG. 20.—STYLES OF MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE.

and then towards the close of the twelfth century there comes a change; just when the true English spirit is beginning to struggle up against its Norman masters and Magna Charta is already within sight, architecture blossoms out into a novel and startling phase. In place of the low, round Norman arch, we behold a new miracle in stone, soaring to a point, propped on columns so delicate and fragile as to appear inadequate for its support did it not rather seem to spring and grow therefrom as branches from a tree rather than to rest upon them with a downward weight. Light airy carvings (strange contrast to the clumsy Norman axe-work) now cluster round the head-stones of each pillar, and flowery bosses begin to decorate the arching vault. From narrow slits the windows grow into a vast field of glass, in the upper part of

which stone or marble mullions meet and intertwine in daring patterns of elaborate tracery. Towers rise to a height no Norman dreamt of, and carry spires yet higher. So men built during the years when the true English spirit was in the first vigour of its birth; and who, looking upon their work, shall say that the English are an unimaginative race?

Two centuries, or barely two, pass thus; and then about the time of the Black Death and Edward's wars another change comes sharp. It is as though a sudden soberness had fallen on the masons. The fantastic tracery of the windows ceases, and in its place the lines of the mullions are carried perpendicularly upwards until they meet the arch. A strict rectangular precision supersedes the former riot of the builder's fancy; and windows appear (in Ruskin's unkind phrase) like gridirons converted into stone. This is the third phase, and it is the last; for it continues until Reformation days, when the classical Art of the Renaissance brings other ideas into the builder's mind and he harks back to the models of ancient Greece and Rome. This perpendicular architecture is often majestic, but it is stereotyped to the border of monotony; and is it, we may ask, a mere coincidence that we find the building of this fifteenth century to be like its history, a trifle dull? Had something—the French wars, for instance—dulled the keen edge of the nation's vigour? In any case the epoch which witnessed the final failure of English arms abroad and the futile tragedy of the civil wars at home, created little that was new in politics or art. It was a period of temporary exhaustion, during which the nation rested before embarking upon yet bolder enterprise.

Mediæval Ritual.—But the Church is, after all, a religious monument; and before all else it is the secret of the people's spiritual life that we should seek to discover there. It is no easy task, for we must not forget that between the Middle Ages and ourselves lies the Protestant Reformation. English religious life has been transformed, and in the process it has largely transformed the churches too. If, therefore, we are fully to appreciate the inner workings of the mediæval mind, we must endeavour, not merely to recall the purposes and uses to which its buildings were once put, but also to imagine the very different appearance these buildings once bore. The English churches suffered terribly at the reformer's hands. The stained glass windows, which told the Bible story in plain pictorial language to the unlettered folk, have in large measure been destroyed, and the dim interior no longer glows with the gorgeous blues and crimsons fashioned by an art which we have long since lost. The frescoed walls, serving a like purpose, have been whitewashed over. The richly painted shrines, the numerous altars lit with candles and draped with splendid hangings, the images of saints, the life-size crucifix which in every parish church stood poised under the chancel arch—all these are gone; and it is only through some knowledge of those countries where the Roman Catholic religion still holds sway that we can call up before our eyes the solemn and elaborate splendour of English mediæval churches and cathedrals. Then again, if

we would picture them as they truly were, we must repeople them with monks and clergy, gathered in the chancel stalls morning and evening and in the watches of the night, to hear mass said, recite a litany, or chant the Psalms in Latin. We must rouse the marble bishop from his slumber on the carved tomb, and send him marching round the aisles and cloister at the head of a procession decked out in all the finery of tunics and copes and carrying aloft some sacred relic or the painted image of a saint. Nor will the church be empty of the common folk. Here will come, daily perhaps although the visit be but short, the ploughman returning from the field, the scrivener fresh from his office, the craftsman from his forge. Some come to recite their tale of "Pater Nosters" counted out upon a string of beads; some to confide the secret of their sins to a priest concealed in the Confessional; others would gather in groups round one of the many altars, listening to the celebration of the mass and warned when to bow the knee or cross the breast by the tinkling of a bell which marks for illiterate worshippers the more solemn and important moments of the Latin liturgy. All this is past: these scenes have vanished and the old ritual is forgotten. But the churches which witnessed them are still the same. Their stones speak to us for the men who fashioned them and set them up; and in them we may read the evidence of a simple piety and childlike faith, a piety and faith which saw fit to lavish upon its minsters and cathedrals ten times the labour expended upon private dwellings, and which knew no better use for the noblest and fairest of man's handiwork than to dedicate it to the honour and glory of Almighty God.

Art and Humour.—And we may say more than that. The spirit in which these mighty works were undertaken and completed was typical of the whole character of mediæval England. Just as the men who planned those vaults or carved those pillars laboured in sheer delight and love of their own art, making things beautiful almost without knowing how or why they did so,¹ proceeding often at haphazard and without settled plan, leaving to the fancy of the individual mason the designing of a capital or the moulding of an arch, so in every phase of mediæval life we may trace a similar reliance upon instinct. These men were like children, following unconsciously where natural impulse led them, living, as it were, in the passing moment, and seldom thinking things out with the logic of pure reason. And, as is the case in children, their characters were queerly mixed. Slaves to the prompting of the moment's whim, they could be grave and gay, austere pious or flippantly irreverent almost at one and the same time. See in the choir-stalls of the church how the monkish carver would give rein to his humorous fancy in designing some caricature of a fellow-monk or some grotesque figure which to ourselves would now seem oddly out of place—a frog committing suicide, a master chastising an unruly boy, or a fox disguised in gown and

¹ Nowadays, the only things which we create in this unconscious spirit, are engines and machines, which are often beautiful though the makers themselves are hardly aware of the fact.

hood, preaching to an audience of unsuspecting geese; yet the monk was not for that, we may be sure, less solemn or less earnest in his prayers. We know, too, how in their religious festivals the men of those days acted Bible scenes with a much more humorous licence than modern taste would now permit. These "mysteries," as the plays were called, were a queer blend of farce and religious sentiment. Disputes between Noah and his wife were a familiar source of merriment, and the lady's indignation, when she discovered her husband to have been engaged for a thousand years upon the Ark without her knowledge, was a never-failing jest. We should think it odd to see the Bethlehem shepherds figuring as a set of coarse buffoons, and odder still perhaps to witness that extraordinary scene in which a little man dressed up in red would caper and roll across the stage to counterfeit the blood of Abel calling for vengeance upon Cain. But such things were quite in keeping with the mediæval character. Whatever men did they most thoroughly enjoyed. They threw their souls into both work and play with a rollicking abandon, so that in their enjoyment they utterly forgot themselves and became unconscious of propriety and prudence. They were like children playing at a game.

For all their miseries and hardships (and these were certainly not few) there can be no doubt that the men of those days knew how to be happy when they might. Hear what Froissart writes about a picnic-party of his youth, and ask yourself how many among modern folk would find an equal relish in the fairness of a spring-time landscape and the delicacies provided for the feast. "In the first days of jolly May . . . God! how fair was the season. The air was clear and windless and serene, and the nightingales sang aloud, rejoicing us with their melody. Clear and fresh was the morn, and we came to a thorn bush all white with blossom; lance-high it stood with fair green shade beneath. Then said one 'Lo! a place made for our pleasant repose; here let us break our fast!' Then with one accord we brought forth the meats: pasties, hams, wines and bake-meats and venison packed in heath." To read these lines is to feel that the Middle Ages were indeed the spring-time of the world.

The Discipline of the Church.—Yet after spring comes summer; and after the child man. The Middle Ages were only a stage—and a natural inevitable stage—in humanity's development. When the barbarians, breaking across Europe, split up for ever the great imperial system by which Rome had held the world together, it was as though the human race had been released from the strict though kindly bondage of a nurse. Men were set free to behave exactly as they pleased, without laws to be regarded or punishment to be feared. Might was right. Each petty ruler was a law unto himself, bullying his subjects and preying on his neighbours by the right of his own might. Each tiny group of people formed its own customs, followed its natural instinct, and lived life in its own way. So the world, as children will, ran wild. Yet sooner or later the day must come when the child must go to school; and little

by little the peoples began to realise the need for discipline. The need brought forth the men, and the institutions. Kings like the Conqueror and Henry II were the peoples' schoolmasters. They established some rule and order; they curbed individual licence; they taught obedience to a common law. Still greater perhaps was the part played by the mediæval Church. She was forever preaching the principles of humanity and justice. She condemned slavery; she tried to check the barbarous customs of the duel and ordeal; even wars came in part to be regulated according to her rules. Even as early as the eleventh century she procured that hostilities should often cease at certain seasons of the year. From the beginning of Advent to the week after Epiphany and from the beginning of Lent to the end of Easter week a "Truce of God" was frequently proclaimed though not so frequently observed upon the Continent.

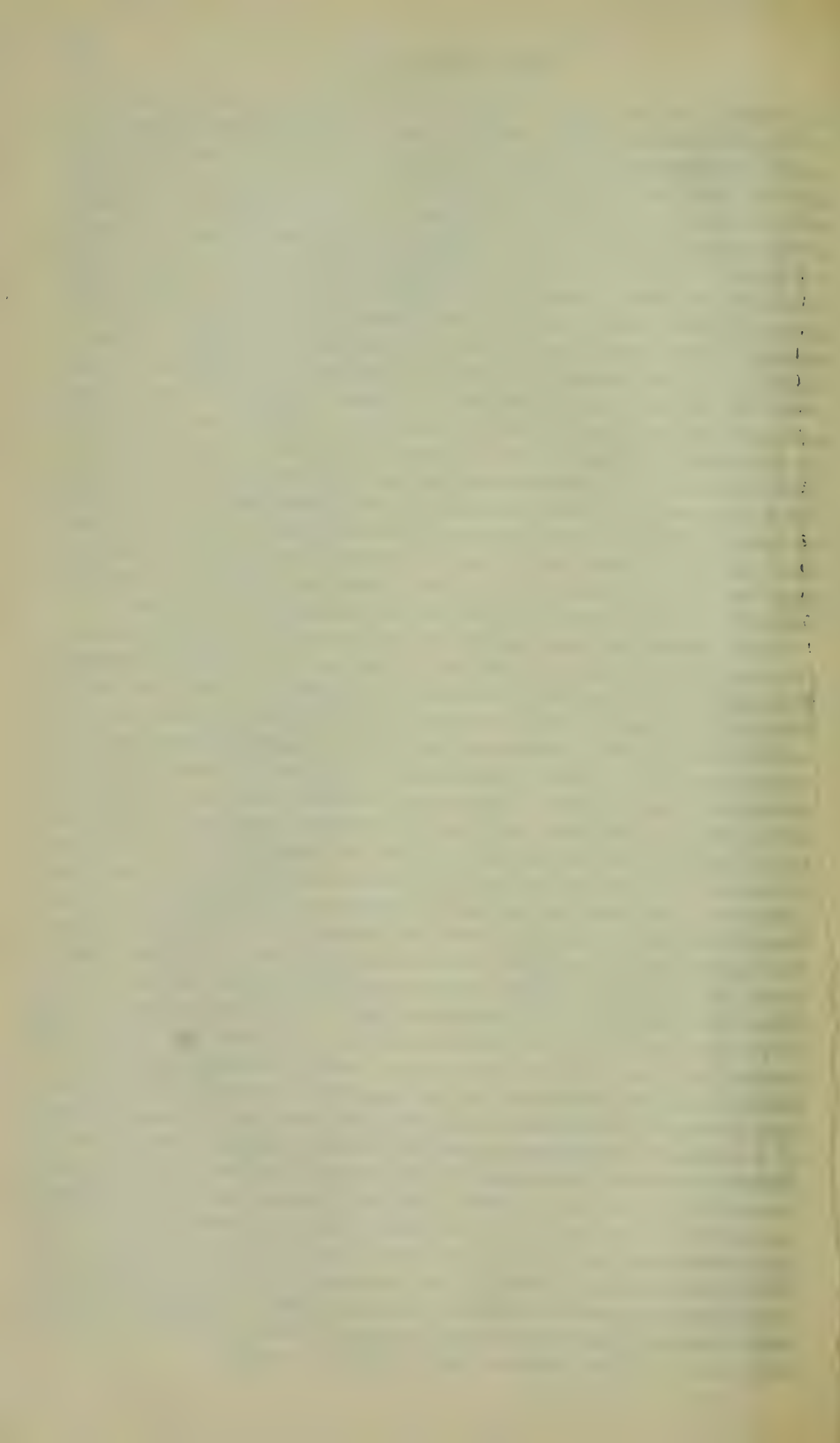
It is not too much to say that the Church invented chivalry; and in spiritual matters she established a hold over the mind of Europe which served to tame and civilise even the most barbarous among peoples. Europe, as the Church of Rome conceived it, was a single unity, bound together by a common obedience to her universal law. Europe was not for her a collection of separate independent States, but Christendom one and indivisible, a single whole. It was a fine ideal, like the modern League of Nations; but the Church was playing for high stakes and the Church lost. The political discipline of kings proved in the end a stronger force than the spiritual discipline of popes; and, as the Middle Ages are drawing to a close, we see that the bonds of national allegiance are being drawn more tightly: the claims of the State are beginning to outweigh the claims of the mother Church. Englishmen are conscious that they must stand together by their King, even if it means defiance to the Pope. Frenchmen, too, under the long discipline of their desperate war with England are knit by closer ties. In other words, England and France are now, in a true sense, nations. That is the real achievement of the Middle Ages. A thousand years have passed since the collapse of Rome and it has taken all those years to bring back Europe to a state of settled government. But it has been done: men can once more go their ways with something like reliance upon law and justice; they can live their lives securely by right of their citizenship in an organised community.

Nationalities and the Reformation.—But, though civilisation was thus recovered, peace was not. Europe was no longer one as she had been under the rule of Rome. She was now many nations, and no sooner were the birth-throes ended from which these nationalities emerged than a new struggle was fated to begin—a struggle between the nations for the dominion of the world.

But the Church did not give up the battle. She had never relinquished her intention to dominate the world, and she still clung jealously to the outworn forms of her authority. Yet, struggle as she might, that authority was now upon the wane. In England especially, but not in Eng-

land alone, her hold was loosening. For Europe was soon to outgrow the age of schooling. The child in due course becomes the man, and when that time arrives he will kick against the discipline which hampers his free development. He will no longer accept what he is told with the trusting credulity of childhood. He will question the authority of his masters, and desire to think and judge for himself, and claim the liberty, which is manhood's privilege, of living life in his own way. And so it was with Europe. Men's eyes were opening; and the English people above all were beginning to dispute Rome's right to keep their consciences and lead them in the way that they should go. Even as early as Wycliffe, doubts had been raised concerning the doctrine of the mass, the sale of indulgences, and the whole theology of the Papacy; and, although they had not yet come out into the open, there were plenty of Wycliffes in England now. It needed but a little more learning, a little more thought, a little more courage, and England would be ripe for the Reformation. She would break with Rome for ever. Germany, at Luther's bidding, was preparing to do the same. The Netherlands were moving that way too. Elsewhere, indeed, the process of enlightenment was to be of slower growth; and Rome was still to maintain her hold in Spain, in Italy, and (despite the Huguenots) in France.

So Christendom was doomed to fall asunder. A great religious cleavage was to divide the nations, as it were, into two hostile camps—Protestants upon one side, Catholics on the other. Thus to the coming struggle for dominion was to be added this further bitterness of a religious feud. Wars were to be fought in a new and harsher spirit. A terrible earnestness entered into men's spirits which drove them on to strange and awful deeds. There were horrors enough set to the record of the Middle Ages; but they were as nothing compared with the tortures, burnings, and executions by which the Spanish Inquisition sought to recover the Netherlands for Rome. Mediæval kings went often to war with their neighbours and mediæval barons conspired against the throne. But seldom indeed did either stoop so low as to the dastardly intrigues, the subornation of assassins, even the employment of infernal instruments, whereby the Catholic monarchs and their agents sought to overthrow their enemies in the name of God. Passions were aroused and perplexities were felt from which mankind had hitherto been free; and looking back over the centuries we may well ask ourselves to which the greater happiness belonged—to this new age, vexed by the poignant questionings of individual consciences, and torn by the world-discord of a religious antagonism, or to the old age, so far removed and so different from our own, in which men rested composedly their single-hearted faith upon a superstitious, but still unquestioned creed. "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise." Yet the quest of fuller truth and wider knowledge beckoned the world on. It is always so. Natural development cannot be stayed; and, as surely as the child must come to man's estate, so the human mind must grow. Only, with maturity come also more perilous decisions, deeper doubts, and yet more searching pains. It is the paradox and mystery of Progress.



PART II
THE TUDORS AND THE STUARTS
1485-1688

CHAPTER I

HENRY VII, HENRY VIII, AND EUROPE

I

As we turn our backs upon the Middle Ages and approach the epoch of the Tudor kings, the character of history seems to change. We step, as it were, across a threshold, and across that threshold discover the Modern World. For in sixteenth-century England we feel unexpectedly at home: we shall find there movements which even at the present day have not yet spent their force; we shall discover problems which are one with ours; individuals who might—but for an accident of time—have been ourselves. In a sense, of course, all history is continuous, and, since the Conquest at least, there has been no sharp or sudden break in England's national development. Nevertheless the Renaissance of the sixteenth century produced in England an incalculable change—a change which altered the Englishman's whole outlook upon life. From what went before it we are irreparably severed: of what followed after it we are ourselves a part, and something more than the passage of four centuries divides us from the Middle Ages. Chaucer's England remains to us a foreign world compared with Shakespeare's; and we can never know the Black Prince or à Becket as we seem to know and understand Elizabeth or Charles Stuart. To such knowledge, moreover, we are in no small measure aided by the very powerful impulse which the Renaissance itself gave to the arts of literature and history. It is not merely that we have the rich treasure-house of sixteenth-century poetry and prose on which to draw, nor that we possess an abundance of State documents, official papers, minutes of royal councils, correspondence written or received by great ambassadors. More than this, we can also penetrate into the innermost minds of Tudor Englishmen and spy upon the privacy of their lives: we can read Henry's own love-letters to Anne Boleyn, Sidney's father's advice to his schoolboy son, the confidences which passed between Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, King Edward's domestic diaries, memoranda, and accounts. We can know how men thought and felt about the most trivial things. Even their very features are familiar to us. For with the Renaissance Art took an immense step forward: and faithful portraiture had soon become quite common. Foreign painters began to arrive across the Channel; and to one in particular, the German Holbein, we owe a matchless series of chalk and pencil sketches drawn from the honest, friendly faces of the gentlemen and

ladies at the court of King Henry VIII. They are more truthful and more lifelike than the most perfect modern photograph.

Of Henry's father, the first Tudor, there still exists such a portrait by an unknown hand, now in the National Portrait Gallery. It is a pale, half-pathetic face of a man aged before his time, with thin wisps of straggling hair across the forehead and a puzzled, careworn, almost wistful look about the eyes. Henry VII was no natural genius certainly; but he took pains—infinite pains—over the business of his life. He bent his careful mind to master every detail of the ruler's craft. He made a close study of the men about him. He sat assiduously at the council board; and there was not a pound spent, not even a single shilling lost at cards, but it was duly noted in the royal accounts and duly initialled by the King's own hand. Henry's success—and it was great—was certainly not unmerited, yet his task was difficult enough.

Yorkist Rebellions.—The battered coronet, taken at Bosworth Field from the dead Richard's head and placed on Henry's,¹ might well stand as a symbol of the realm which passed therewith under the victor's care. England, broken and distracted by full thirty years of civil war, was in a sorry case. Authority was bankrupt; treasuries were empty; law had lost its hold. Murderers went unpunished; brigand bands lived on rapine; and "few," says a foreigner, "would venture alone into the country excepting by broad day and fewer still into the towns by night." The very miseries of the past made Henry's task for the future easier. The country was crying out for ordered government and a termination of the futile war. The quarrel of the Roses had never meant much to the nation as a whole. It meant less than nothing now when Henry's marriage with Elizabeth of York had welded the rival houses into one; and among every class alike there was unanimous resolve to uphold the peaceful promise of the House of Tudor. Irreconcilables of course there were; and York still had its partisans among the remnants of the old nobility. Unluckily for them, the one surviving member of the house—the murdered Clarence's son—was a prisoner in the Tower. The best they could do was to put forward an impostor in his stead. Lambert Simnel, child of an Oxford organ-maker, was coached up to play the part. But his escapade was brief. When he appeared from Ireland with a motley mercenary host, Henry scattered it with ease. Of Simnel's backers some perished and some fled. The boy himself received a contemptuous pardon from the King and the post of scullion in the royal kitchen. Similar failure overtook a similar impostor—the notorious Perkin Warbeck, who posed as the younger of the two boy princes smothered in the Tower. His three miserable efforts at revolt—in Kent, Northumberland, and Cornwall—each in its turn collapsed. Then Warbeck himself surrendered, made confession of his fraud, was granted his life, plotted again and lost it; and with that final flutter the Yorkist intrigues died away.

Henry had been swift in their suppression and merciful to the mis-

¹ Portrait of Henry VII. Plate VII, opp. page 162.

guided adventurers who led them. He could afford to be. Such power had descended upon his shoulders as had fallen to no English king for many a long year. The nobility was no longer dangerous. The civil war had carried off its leaders. Child-heirs and harmless gentlemen alone remained and even the greatest families were impoverished by the prolonged hostilities. Parliament too, which had kept such jealous watch upon the English kings throughout the fourteenth century, had grown impotent and nerveless during the fifteenth. Men looked no more to Westminster for championship and justice. The King was the champion now. His authority was supreme and the Crown's prestige unchallenged. The Tudors were popular sovereigns in a sense that no others were before or after them. They not merely governed, but they led the nation; and their policies were at once an appeal and a response to the affections of a loyal folk. The Tudors, moreover, were no fools. Though their power was in part the natural outcome of events, they sedulously increased it. Seeing the feudal nobility robbed of its old sting, Henry VII did not intend that the sting should grow again; and to this end he devised a variety of means. He strictly limited the number of retainers that any man might keep. Both to enforce this regulation and to punish all offences against peace, he created a new Court,¹ known from the painted decorations of its meeting-place as the Court of the Star Chamber. It included all the chief ministers of State; and, though its unfettered powers were naturally a source of terror to the great, so that the head of no suspected personage was safe, yet for the time at least it was a useful instrument of order and a central bulwark of the royal authority. But greatest perhaps of all King Henry's triumphs was finance. By confiscation of his enemies' estates, by rigorous taxes, and by a strict and even miserly economy, he succeeded in filling the coffers he had found so empty. Money means power; and, when King Henry died, he left behind a treasure of 1,800,000 pounds. No previous king of England had ever possessed one-half of such a sum.

Domestic and Foreign Policy.—Nor was this hoard amassed at the expense of an impoverished and languishing country. England, on the contrary, was fast growing rich; and Henry was shrewd enough to aid and stimulate the growth. This was the period in which her commercial greatness was definitely born. In every direction her sailors and merchantmen were busy. While the Cabots of Bristol were cruising the Atlantic in search of unknown lands, their less adventurous comrades were pushing trade in European waters. English wool was sent to Venice, and Oriental spices brought hither in return. England sold cloth and grain to Iceland in exchange for salted fish; and through the adroit diplomacy of Henry was even admitted to the Baltic ports—a

¹ In point of fact, it was the use to which the Court was put that was a novelty rather than the Court itself, which was merely a branch of the King's Council. In fact the Tudor policy was to develop rather than to innovate. The Tudors respected and upheld tradition; the Stuarts flouted it. Hence the popularity of the one and the unpopularity of the other.

market over which the commercial league of Hanseatic or North German towns had hitherto commanded a unique monopoly. Last but not least, England maintained her traditional entente with Flanders. Despite the interferences of its territorial chief (the Netherlands had now passed into the keeping of the house of the Austrian Dukes), Henry was able to secure more favourable conditions for his merchants there. Through a wise commercial treaty the so-called "Great Intercourse" began, and trade plied merrily across the narrow seas.

Meanwhile the King's eyes had not been blind to the advantages of political alliance. Europe was seething with intrigue, and there were many cross-currents between the various courts; but Henry succeeded in forming a most valuable link with the ruling house of Spain. Both sovereigns feared the French; and, to cement the bond which this common feeling gave them, a matrimonial match was planned between their heirs. The details of the dowry were a subject for much haggling; for Henry was nothing if not mean. But all was at last settled. Catherine, the girl Infanta, was shipped across from Spain, and duly wedded to Arthur, Prince of Wales, at the time just turned fourteen. Next year Prince Arthur died. It was a heavy blow, not least to the hopeful parents of the girl; yet a remedy was close to hand, and two days before their letter offering condolence to Henry was indited, an envoy had been commissioned to propose another match. The dead Prince, they knew, had a younger brother, named Henry like his father; what more fitting bride for him than their now widowed daughter? True, canon law forbade even a child to marry his brother's widow. But the Pope was all-powerful in such matters, and a dispensation could easily be procured. Their happy thought fell upon fruitful soil. The Pope was willing. Negotiations were begun. But more than one obstacle arose, and, before they were completed, the King of England died. Among the last counsels which he gave his son was an earnest injunction to marry the girl widow. The injunction was obeyed; and the opening event of the new reign was the solemnisation of a marriage between the youthful sovereign Henry VIII of England and Catherine of Aragon and Spain. Amid the chorus of rejoicing no one dreamt with what tremendous consequences for England and for Europe that marriage would be fraught.

II

Character of Henry VIII.—Henry VIII at the time of his accession was a boy of eighteen, with a fresh, clean English face (which some called feminine), reddish-brown hair, and the build of a well-made athlete. Princes received a thorough schooling in those days; and Henry, moreover, was talented beyond ordinary men. He could speak three languages, of which Latin was one, argue a point of theology, compose a tune or a sonnet, and play half a dozen instruments in turn. But, being a true Englishman, sport was his first love; and in sport he was more than remarkable. There was not his match in all the kingdom

with the long-bow or the tennis racquet. He was a reckless jousting, and would ride thirty courses in one afternoon, shivering lances, wearing out his mounts, and "capsizing opponents" (so a witness tells us), "horse and all." Nothing could tire him. He was out in the hunting-field at cockcrow. He could keep the dance running far into the night. At the outset he neglected his less pleasant duties, and the routine of State affairs was left in other hands; his whole energy was thrown into the pleasures and thrills of a gay Court life, which, for all its brave endeavour to perpetuate the pomp of a dying chivalry, reminds us somehow, with its frills and furbelows, its slashed sleeves and tinselled laces, of the unreal, though showy, splendour of a Fancy Dress Ball. Henry's tastes, however, jumped with the spirit of his age: the people warmed to the fascination of his exuberant boyhood, and readily pardoned the excesses which he carried off with so much grace. Nor did the popularity thus won desert him when its support was needed for the tremendous task of his more serious years. For, like many a successful athlete, Henry soon proved himself a born leader and a capable man of affairs. His qualities in the end were none the poorer because first tested and matured in pastimes natural to his youth. Thus the same energy which would out-tire ten horses in a tilting-match was one day destined to be the terror of cardinals and princes. The cool courage, proved so often in the hazards of the chase, was to stand unappalled before the threats of a hostile Christendom. Manhood, in fine, developed in Henry full powers of brain and character which had for a while lain fallow. He worked almost with passion—often single-handed now—pursuing his own interest (which by good luck was the country's interest too) with grim determination. Towards the end his rude health failed him. He grew corpulent and suffered much from headache; but this only served to sharpen his temper without weakening it. He had never kept a minister—or a wife—when it served his purpose to discard them. But now his headstrong character developed what seems to us a strain of irresponsibility, and he employed the headsman's axe to save himself the trouble of superfluous thought. Men will consider him a hero or a tyrant, a reformer or a heretic, according as they approve or disapprove the policy for which he stood. But few can deny their homage, be their ultimate verdict what it may, to the solitary grandeur of that master will.

The Monarchs of Europe.—Of these latent powers in Henry there was, however, as yet no hint, when in 1509 he began his momentous reign. He entered the stage of international affairs a callow boy, wholly ignorant of the sordid game of corruption and deceit which in those days was called diplomacy. A new era in world politics had just set in. The chaotic, seething Europe of the Middle Ages had now at length settled down into more or less compact and truly national states. In the centre of the stage lay France, no longer a loose group of feudal dukedoms, barely acknowledging the French King's sway, but a realm single and united, forged by the skilful statecraft of Charles VII and Louis XI. The latter's son, Louis XII, now occupied its throne. A similar trans-

formation had taken place in Spain: there the two states of Castile and Aragon, long held jealously apart, had been united by the recent marriage-match between Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, the parents of the girl who was first Arthur's wife and now Henry's. Their union had laid the foundation-stone of their people's coming greatness. No country in Europe showed more brilliant promise than sixteenth-century Spain. For courage, skill, and numbers her soldiers were unmatched. Her trade was growing. The enterprise of her sailors had secured for her the illimitable wealth of the New World; and the gold which her fleets transported yearly across the western ocean was soon to fill her coffers till they overflowed. Ferdinand was an astute monarch. He saw his opportunities. He was resolved to improve upon them; and not unnaturally he recognised his chief enemy and rival in his neighbour king, Louis of France.

Eastwards, however, there was yet another power with which both Spain and France were bound to reckon, but which it is impossible to call a state. What we now call Germany was in those days a multitude of states, varying in size, ruled by petty kings or princes, and virtually independent of each other. There was but one link between them. They all acknowledged a common head, the Emperor. The Holy Roman Empire was not what it had been; now barely a shadow of its former self, it was little more than a solemn pretence—scarcely, as somebody has said, an Empire; in no sense Roman; most certainly not Holy. Nevertheless it was an institution which had stood the test of time. Seven centuries before, when the Pope crowned Charlemagne in St. Peter's Church at Rome, he had in effect accepted a lay partner. The Emperor, such was the great idea, was to be to Europe what the Pope was himself to Christendom, God's vice-regent among men, a universal master for the universal good. Times had changed; and the Emperor's position had changed too. The extent of his authority had dwindled; and outside Germany none now acknowledged his sway. His relations with the Pope had grown precarious: the partnership was no longer a reality: sometimes the two were even at daggers drawn. Little, in short, remained to the Emperor but his immense prestige. He received his office (to be held by him for life) from the hands of Prince Electors, the heads of seven German bishoprics and states. The post was nominally open to all candidates; but in practice it had become the Electors' habit to bestow it on the ruling member of the house of Hapsburg, the famous family of the Austrian Dukes. Thus, as Duke of Austria, the Emperor was not as a rule without material resources; but from the Empire itself he drew practically none. Not an inch of German soil became his thereby. It brought him little money and, unless he was prepared to pay for them, no troops. Often impecunious, frequently flouted by his subjects, the Emperor remained an antique figure-head, cherishing, as best he might, the relics of a decayed authority, half-feudal in origin and half-divine. To hold his head high on Europe, to fish when occasion served in the troubled waters of diplomacy, to increase his waning powers by

alliance, intermarriage or intrigue, was for him, more perhaps than for any other sovereign, a necessity of life. Maximilian—the ruling Emperor at this time—was a past master of these arts; and very adroitly did he follow the cue of his own selfish, personal interests in the great three-handed political match with his rivals, Louis of France and Ferdinand of Spain.

During the last years of King Henry VII these three greedy schemers were busy at their game; but, as it so happened, their object was not so much to conquer each other's territory as to forestall each other in annexing those small free states of Europe which had not been hitherto absorbed. Of these the richest and most desirable lay in North Italy; and thus the cock-pit of sixteenth-century fighting was pitched in the Lombard plains. The Italian peninsula was not then, as it is now, one solid and united country, but was divided into many separate states. Of these, the central portion was the property of the Pope. The southern, called the kingdom of Naples, had recently passed under the control of Ferdinand. North of the Apennines were several independent states, chief of which were the Republic of Venice and the Duchy of Milan. These last were the natural quarry of the three great powers: the Emperor claimed them, Ferdinand coveted them, and in 1509, to Ferdinand's intense annoyance, Louis had conquered them. North Italy was for the moment delivered up to France.

Henry and Ferdinand.—It was the year of Henry's accession to the English throne; and the old fox Ferdinand, knowing the boy's generous and impulsive nature, marked him for a serviceable pawn in the game he was playing against France. Henry's wife Catherine was his own daughter and a most useful go-between. Everything, in short, favoured his design, and by 1512 Henry had been pushed into sending an English expeditionary force for a joint invasion of French Aquitaine. English troops landed; but no Spanish force appeared. Dysentery broke out, and the soldiers mutinied. Still Ferdinand sent no help. The truth was he had never meant to: his own purposes had been fully served by the English presence on French soil. Louis had been scared. He had allowed the independent kingdom of Navarre to fall an easy prey to Spain. French troops had been withdrawn from Lombardy. Ferdinand, in short, had won a bloodless victory at the cheap price of a humiliating and disastrous failure to the English arms. Henry had been tricked. Next year the same farce was repeated. Ferdinand, Maximilian, and the Pope agreed with Henry for a combined attack on France. Henry crossed to Calais in person and routed the French at the Battle of the Spurs, so called in mocking reference to the Frenchmen's flight. The campaign this time was a success. It recovered once more the country's lost prestige—a prestige by no means diminished by the great victory, won in Henry's absence, over the Frenchmen's Scottish allies at Flodden Field. But where, meanwhile, was Ferdinand? He had done nothing, had not raised a finger, and for the very simple reason that four days before signing his agreement with King Henry he had made a secret truce

with the King of France. Yet the Spaniard was quite impenitent. That was always his way. Somebody once informed him that a rival had complained of having been twice cheated. "He lies," was Ferdinand's reply; "I have cheated him three times." And now, because Henry refused to despatch a second expedition into Aquitaine, he went about cursing his son-in-law for having left him in the lurch!

But Henry had learnt his lesson. He was now thoroughly disillusioned, and henceforth he was determined to show Ferdinand and Maximilian that he could play them at their own game, and beat them too. His opportunity was not long in coming. Ferdinand and Maximilian were engaged in concocting a magnificent scheme for bringing North Italy back, as it once had been, under the rule of the Empire. Louis, who by now had lost his hold on Venice and Milan, was somehow or other to be inveigled into acquiescence. At this moment Louis' wife died. Louis himself was fifty-two and gouty; but he was once more "upon the marriage market," and Henry suddenly startled the world by proposing as a bride his own sister aged nineteen. The queer bargain was struck. France and England patched up their quarrel and showed a united front. Ferdinand and his ally might whistle in vain for alliances now: they had lost all chance of bribing or bullying Louis, and all their magnificent schemes melted into thin air. The guileless young Henry had made fools of them both.

III

Wolsey.—The credit for this new bold line of policy was not altogether due, perhaps was not even due at all, to Henry himself. There was another voice, which more and more insistently, as time went on, was making itself heard in the councils of the King. It was the voice of Wolsey, already for some years a prominent member of the Court, combining the duties of minister for war with the rôle of Archbishop of York, and now in 1515 raised to be Chancellor of the realm and created a Cardinal by the Francophile Pope. Next to the King himself, Wolsey was the outstanding figure of the reign. Like Thomas à Becket and Mr. Lloyd George, he was a man of the people, son to a middle-class merchant of Ipswich. The Church was the one career which then offered high promotion to such a man; and as a cleric Wolsey had quickly risen into favour at the Court. His native wits and a tireless industry had made him first useful, then indispensable, to Henry. While his master hunted, Wolsey worked at home. He attended to every detail of administration. The whole burden of affairs fell upon his shoulders; and even if a letter in the royal handwriting was needed, Wolsey first would make a draft of it and then send it to the King to copy out. Not that such labour was distasteful to him: on the contrary, it was the breath of life to his ambitious soul.

Wolsey was a born autocrat: he loved to gather all the reins of power into his own hands; and he soon came to regard himself, not with-

out justice, as the true governor of England. Nor was he at pains to conceal his opinion of his own importance. He used the word "I" with growing frequency, when "we" would have been more tactful and polite to the sovereign whom he served. His famous phrase, "Ego et Rex Meus," though good Latin, was bad politics; yet no doubt it represents correctly the order of precedence which he himself assigned to his own rôle. With his clerical duties Wolsey was less seriously concerned: he never so much as visited some of the Cathedrals in the province of which he was titular head. He kept house with the pomp of a prince, dressed and dined with regal splendour, and gave himself the airs of a great potentate. Noblemen were known to have held the basin for him while he washed his hands; and once, when in the heyday of his power he had a meeting with the Emperor, he never so much as dismounted from his horse, but doffed his cap as to an equal. And, in brains at any rate, there was no doubt he was the equal of any man on earth. Diplomacy was his special strength. In that contest of wits which requires a quick perception of an opponent's mind, rare gifts of speech and reticence, and perhaps a certain lack of too nice principle, Wolsey has seldom, if ever, been excelled. It was doubly fortunate, therefore, that he came to the fore at this precise moment and no other; for events were moving fast in Europe, and before many months were over every power he possessed would be needed to the full.

In truth a crisis was approaching which was to throw the world into the melting-pot. Within four years all the three great figures of European politics had died. Louis went first. Ferdinand followed; and last, the Emperor Maximilian succumbed to a stroke of apoplexy in 1519. Louis was succeeded on the throne of France by his young son Francis, a handsome, clever villain, "who looked," we are told, "like the Devil." Spain had fallen to Ferdinand's grandson Charles; but Charles (and here lay the rub) was, upon his father's side, grandson to Maximilian too, and it was as certain as anything could be that the Electors would make him emperor in Maximilian's room. The courts of Europe were all in a flutter, wondering what could be done to hinder an election which would concentrate such tremendous power in a single pair of hands? Francis put in as a candidate against him. Henry became a candidate too. It was in vain. Charles was duly elected Emperor at the age of nineteen years. Not even Napoleon in his palmiest days gained dominion over so vast a territory as now fell, as it were from heaven, into the lap of this young man. Emperor of Germany, Archduke of Austria, master of the Netherlands which went therewith, he was also King of Spain and in that right lord over Naples and Sicily and all the new-found riches of the "Spanish Main." Two-thirds of Europe lay in his grasp. France was encompassed on every side by his dependencies; and as for England, what strength could an insignificant island find to oppose to such a world-wide domination? The only hope lay for her in the astuteness of her chancellor and the high courage of her King.

And Henry and Wolsey were equal to the occasion. Their recent

experiences had shown them how to act. England still possessed a wealth and a prestige out of all proportion to her actual size. No continental sovereign could despise her as an enemy: all alike were eager to claim her as a friend. Her best chance, therefore, was to play with delicate finesse upon these hopes and fears. Charles and Francis were more equally matched than at first sight would appear. England, as Wolsey was quick to recognise, might hold the scales between the two rival powers. She might play off one against the other, and so get the better of them both. Thus was conceived the policy which is known as the Balance of Power. To commit herself decisively to neither side, to lean habitually towards whichever seems the weaker, yet to reserve the right of shifting at any moment as events dictate—to preserve a complete liberty of action, or, in other words, to trim—that was the policy which England under Wolsey's guidance first adopted, and which she has followed on and off for many centuries since. It is not perhaps a glorious policy. It has earned for her the title of "perfidious Albion"; but, just because she is an island, detached from the main current of European interests, yet much at the mercy of a combination between strong continental powers, it has been perhaps, in the past at least, not merely a necessity of her safe existence, but also a frequent guarantee of Europe's peace.

The Balance of Power.—The Balance of Power was now the game which Henry and Wolsey were purposing to play. Charles and Francis were already at loggerheads over North Italy; and both were competing eagerly for the Englishman's support. Francis pressed for a marriage between Henry's infant daughter Mary and his own son the Dauphin. Charles relied on his aunt Catherine, Queen of England, to uphold his claims. Wolsey played them both like a skilful angler, made no definite promises to either, yet offered neither a definite rebuff. No English minister had ever held such influence in Europe; and men called him openly the Arbiter of Christendom. So things continued for a while; but it could not last for ever. Henry had promised to hold a conference with Francis; and it was arranged they should meet near Calais in the spring of 1520. Charles was on tenterhooks. A day or two before the English diplomats embarked, he came hurrying across from Spain, to make sure of their intent. The two monarchs spent the Feast of Pentecost together. Then Henry departed for his conference in France. The preparations made by Francis to receive him were worthy indeed of the occasion. Never perhaps in the whole range of history was such an extravagant display of royal pomp. Francis' camp had been pitched "near a little river, upon a meadow where were several fountains. In it were 300 or 400 tents that it was goodly to see; amongst others a great pavilion for the King, as high as the highest tower, and three of a middle size, as high as the walls of a town, of wonderful breadth, covered with cloth of gold outside, and inside cloth of gold frieze. The great one was covered at the top with cloth of gold frieze and below with velvet cramoisy violet, powdered with gold fleurs-de-lys.

On the top was an image of St. Michael, gilt with fine gold, as large as a man, having a mantle painted with fine azure, powdered with fleurs-de-lys, and holding a dart in his right hand and in the left a shield with the arms of France very brilliant."

Henry and Wolsey were not to be outdone; and their escort was superb. It may well be doubted whether the King or the Cardinal was the more magnificent. Wolsey was clothed in crimson satin, with a train of gentlemen in crimson velvet. He rode a mule decked out with gold trappings and red silk. The meeting of the French and English sovereigns was marked by extraordinary tokens of affection and esteem. Henry and Francis first embraced on horseback, then, to show that this was not enough, on foot. Their only difference was on a point of etiquette. Each modestly insisted that the other should be first to kiss the crucifix. They finally compromised by kissing each other's cheek instead. When Henry departed, Francis made no doubt that he had captured England. He little knew. On reaching Calais, Henry doubled back to Gravelines on the Flanders coast. There Charles was waiting for him; and the two met once again. There was less ceremony but more sincerity at Gravelines than on the Field of Gold; and before the King and Emperor parted they had signed a treaty of alliance against France.

We may shrewdly guess that it was Wolsey's doing. But what motive inspired that sage diplomatist to make this decisive and extraordinary move remains an unsolved mystery. For it was unmistakably a blunder. Charles and Francis were now certain to make war, and it was equally certain that Francis would be crushed. Charles would then have not two-thirds but the whole of Europe at his feet; and what would become of Wolsey's Balance of Power? True, France was England's hereditary foe, and a French defeat would perhaps be welcome to British pride. But Wolsey was not given to cheap sentiment, and he knew that Henry at best could never reign in France. Was it, then, that he scented trouble brewing in England and wished, like Henry V, to direct men's thoughts abroad? A third possibility remains. Charles was the one man in whose power it now lay to turn a Cardinal into a Pope. Did Wolsey dream of sitting in St. Peter's chair? Twice we know he was actually a candidate; but Rome had no fancy for an English Pope; he never got a tenth part of the votes. Be that as it may, the die was now cast. War was declared between Francis and Charles; Wolsey's attempts to mediate were magnificent but fruitless; and the two were soon at it hammer and tongs in the plains of Lombardy. The end was not long deferred. Four years after the conference near Calais, Francis was beaten. He was caught by the Emperor's captains at Pavia. His troops were routed and he himself made a prisoner. Not North Italy alone, but the entire destinies of Europe, passed with that victory into the hands of Charles. Henry and Wolsey were reaping the bitter fruits of their false step.

The Divorce and Charles V.—The truth was that their duplicity had overreached itself, and in one way it rendered the situation infinitely

worse. Henry had never given Charles his whole-hearted support. One expedition against France had been a mere fiasco; and England could now claim no credit with the victor of Pavia. But there was more than this: Henry, true to his policy of detachment, was contemplating a step which could mean nothing else than a complete break with Charles.



FIG. 21.

Catherine of Aragon, his queen, was not a satisfactory wife, for the simple reason that she had never presented Henry with a son and heir.¹ Henry was tired of her; he was in love with Anne Boleyn; and he was resolved, in short, to move for a divorce. But he was forced to remember—doubly so in the light of what had happened at Pavia—that Catherine

¹ Catherine had, in point of fact, borne several other children to Henry besides Mary; but they had all died within a few days of birth. It is a curious fact that the children of this robust Tudor family seldom survived beyond childhood.

was Charles's aunt; and Charles would have the strongest possible objections, not merely to his aunt's divorce, but to the severance of this English tie.

When Henry Tudor had resolved upon a course, it was not in his nature to turn back or shrink from the unpleasant consequences of his decision. He had already lost no time in making a prudent peace with France; and now, Pavia or no Pavia, with Charles's approval or without it, he determined to divorce his queen. Catherine, as he conveniently recalled, had been his brother Arthur's wife before she had been his—a most irregular arrangement and quite contrary to all law. True, the Pope had given his sanction to the irregularity. But had he the power to do so? or, if he had the power, had he not also the power to undo what had been done? Henry soon actually began to feel a twinge of conscience on the matter; and before long he had quite convinced himself that his marriage with Catherine was a sin. He had not yet, however, spoken openly of his project, still less made any application to the Pope, when a blow fell even more startling and disconcerting than Pavia. The campaigns of these days were not on a large scale. The troops employed were no national hosts, but mercenary bands proportionate in size to the pay promised and the plunder offered. The result was that, like the Free Companies of the Fourteenth century, they often got out of hand. This was precisely what happened with the Emperor's troops victorious at Pavia. A detachment had already advanced on Rome to overawe the Pope; and thither in 1526 the main body followed. Once arrived in that rich city, the soldiers had run amok, looted monasteries and palaces, murdered cardinals and nuns, stabled their horses in St. Peter's, and held the Pope himself a close prisoner in his castle of St. Angelo. Christendom was shocked out of its senses; but, though their master Charles was not responsible for his troops' barbarous conduct, the result was not unpleasing to him. He had intended to put some pressure on the Pope; and now the Holy Father was a prisoner in his hands, and under a plain obligation of dancing to whatever tune his captor played. For Henry's project this turn of events looked black indeed. Whatever private opinion the Pope might hold on the question of the divorce, his public verdict was now certain to be the verdict of Queen Catherine's nephew. Yet Henry, as usual, still held on. He opened negotiations and put the case officially into Wolsey's hands.

Wolsey did not want the divorce. He feared Anne Boleyn, who was notoriously an enemy of the clergy; and as Cardinal he was by no means anxious to offend the Pope. Nevertheless, he was beginning to know Henry and to know him for his master. It was now a question of obedience or dismissal: there was no other choice. So it was with the great Cardinal's approval that the application to the Pope was duly made. There is no space here to relate the tedious tale of the long negotiations. The Pope, fearful of offending Henry, but still more fearful of offending Charles, shuffled, hedged, and prevaricated as best he could. Henry might send Catherine into a nunnery; Henry, if he liked, might have

two wives; anything, in fact, excepting a divorce. A document purporting to give Henry all he asked was sent from Rome; but, when it arrived in England, it was found to be so worded as to prove quite useless. Finally, Cardinal Campeggio was despatched to London to try the case in company with Wolsey. The trial began at Blackfriars in the spring of 1529. Catherine herself appeared before the court. So did the King. By the end of July the session was nearing its end. The judgment was momentarily expected, when Campeggio, who all along had been busy playing for time, suddenly declared the court adjourned till autumn. It never met again. Sick of delays, Henry had taken the bit between his teeth, and nothing would stop him now.

Fall of Wolsey. Break with Rome.—The first man to feel the weight of the royal displeasure was the minister who had striven so faithfully to procure the divorce he loathed and whose only crime was that he had failed. Wolsey, now discredited in his foreign policy as he was already unpopular at home, was ordered to hand over the Great Seal. After a brief disgrace, he was allowed to resume his Archbishopric; and for the first time in his life he bethought himself seriously of his religious responsibilities at York. Then the last blow fell. A charge of treasonable plotting was issued against him—not perhaps altogether without cause. He was arrested and brought southward towards the Tower. At Leicester his ebbing strength collapsed. He knew Henry too well to expect mercy and he despaired. “Had I served God,” he said, “as diligently as I have served my King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs.” He was buried in a simple fashion by the Leicester monks.

Meanwhile the King’s conscience had made a fresh discovery. He now saw no reason why the Pope should be the spiritual head of England—no reason, in fact, why he should not be the head himself. This once settled in his mind, he resolved to take Parliament into his confidence; and with Parliament’s arrival the attack upon the Papacy began. Though the clergy made an obstinate resistance, the nation’s representatives were strongly with the King. One by one the Pope’s powers over the English Church were annulled. Catherine’s divorce was settled. In 1533 Anne Boleyn became queen, and that unattractive lady added her weight to the campaign against the clerics. The Pope was furious and prepared to excommunicate the offender; but Henry was ready for him; and a willing Parliament soon passed an Act binding the English clergy “under submission to His Majesty the King.” Two years later the Act of Supremacy was passed, and the Pope’s authority over England, maintained since the Conference at Whitby 900 years before, passed for ever away.

The plunge was taken. The King was confident of success: he was in the highest of spirits. “Never,” said one observer, “have I seen him merrier than he now is.” But the risks yet to be run were appalling; and the real danger still lay ahead. The Pope, timid creature as he was, was roused at last. Charles was already exasperated by Luther’s

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Protestant movements among his own German subjects; Henry's with Rome was therefore a deadlier wound than the divorce of his dozen aunts; and the Emperor King was desperate. Even Francis, though delighted at the blow thus dealt to his Spanish rival, was too good a Papist to regard Henry's act with anything but horror. The least that could be expected of them was that the two monarchs should combine to suppress this dangerous heretic. An Armada manned by Frenchmen as well as Spaniards, blessed by the Pope and backed by the common sentiment of Europe, might at any moment be launched against England's shores. Invasion at one time seemed certain; and the nation rallied to Henry with enthusiasm. Forts were built along the Channel coast. Women and children worked with shovels at the trenches. But the Armada never came.

Francis was too jealous of Charles and Charles was too jealous of Francis for either to begin the move. They were too far parted by their political dissensions to combine for a religious war; and were they also perhaps a little afraid of what Englishmen might do? At any rate, the Fates were on England's side; and the spirit of the dead Cardinal must have watched the issue with a grim self-satisfaction. The jealousies on which during his lifetime he had played so skilfully were serving a higher purpose than those to which he put them. The fear of England which he had planted so deeply in the mind of Europe now served her in good stead; and for all his graceless ingratitude the King perhaps even owed his country's safety and his own to the work of the very chancellor whom he had broken and whose policies he had deserted for the difficult and doubtful paths he was now treading unaided and alone.

CHAPTER II

HENRY AND THE REFORMATION

It has been a favourite and a frequent sneer among enemies of the English Reformation to set it all down to an unedifying matrimonial dispute and a King's love-affair with a lady. Now the divorce of Catherine played its part no doubt in the business; yet it is a shallow view which can see nothing more in the breach with Rome than the whim of a tyrant-monarch, carried away by a momentary passion and dragging his obedient people after him like a flock of silly sheep. Henry was certainly powerful in England; but he was not quite so powerful as that; nor is such the stuff of which Englishmen are made. Had Henry's subjects not wanted the Reformation they would have resisted it as stoutly and no doubt as successfully as their grand-children resisted the intolerance of the Stuarts. But they did want it, and for many years past they had been moving, slowly indeed but surely, in the direction of the change. The strong growth of their political independence had taught them to distrust and dislike the tyrannies of priestcraft; they

were very generally suspicious of clerical pretensions and clerical privilege; nor had they resented the audacious attack which Wycliffe made on the supremacy of Rome. It was now over a hundred years since Wycliffe died; and in those years the world had been moving very rapidly indeed. A strange and revolutionary influence had been born, which was even now sweeping northward across Europe and illuminating the darkness of a superstitious age with a new and powerful light. The Renaissance, in short, had begun, and men's religious beliefs were bound to change, because their minds were changing too. Before, therefore, we can understand the new theology, we must turn to the New Learning, for it is the key to the Reformation.

I. THE RENAISSANCE IN SOUTH AND NORTH

There is a type of person, common enough even in these days of general education, whose habit it is to repose a childlike faith on what he has been told. His authority may be a book or a politician or a favourite newspaper; and, no matter what they say, he gives it his implicit trust, and, without exercising his own judgment in the least, repeats their verdict as infallibly correct. Fifty years ago the type was even commoner than it is now. It was then the fashion, for instance, to believe every word in the Bible to be literally true. Folk believed that the universe was created in seven days of twenty-four hours each and that the prophet Jonah was swallowed alive by a whale: they would have been just as ready to believe it, if the Bible had told them that the whale had been swallowed by Jonah. In the Middle Ages this type of mind was not merely common: it was almost universal. Individual judgment was then at a discount; and authority was everything, especially the authority of the Church. The whole system of education was, as we have seen, under the Church's thumb; and to believe the Church's word—not in religious matters only, but in all—was a fundamental article of faith. Now the studies of that period centred mainly round two things—religious doctrine as the Church interpreted it, and the works of Aristotle the Greek philosopher as the Church interpreted them. I say “as the Church interpreted them,” because, oddly enough, the original sources of knowledge were hardly ever touched. Masses of the priests had never read, and much less studied, the New Testament. As for reading the Greek text in which it was first written, hardly one had so much as mastered the Greek alphabet. For the same reason, the learned class, or Schoolmen as they were called, had often no knowledge of Aristotle at first hand. They spent most of their time in making arguments and drawing deductions from what he was supposed to have meant—a highly ingenious, but somewhat unprofitable, exercise of wits. Indeed, though many of these subtle philosophers were men of enormous intellectual ability and produced books which were monuments of learning, a great part of their lucubrations appears to have borne no relation whatsoever to the actual facts of life. One pious wiseacre, for instance,

undertook to compute what number of angels could find a seat on the point of a pin: another seriously argued that Julius Cæsar could not possibly be the author of the "Gallic War," because so busy a man could never have found time to learn Latin!

These are somewhat blatant examples of mediæval fatuity; but it is clear enough at every turn that even the wiser Schoolmen did not encourage their pupils to think anything out for themselves; they never looked at the facts in the light of plain common sense. Such an attitude of mind was bad enough in the class-room; for it stifled all chance of true knowledge and progress. But it was infinitely more serious when the Schoolmen came to lay down the law about practical things. They had their own theories about science, astronomy, geography and the rest. They professed to know all about history; and a strange sort of history it was, mixing up classical and biblical characters in a most astonishing medley, and introducing Brutus quite complacently among the heroes of the Trojan War. The surface of the world itself was mapped out according to the oddest notions, in which Scripture played a far more important part than geography; and Jerusalem was fixed as the appropriate centre of the earth. The heavens were treated in like fashion, the earth taking Jerusalem's place as the centre of the universe. No debate was allowed on such points; the pious public was expected to swallow them whole; and when first Copernicus, and later Galileo, advanced the rival explanation that the earth moved round the sun, they were denounced as heretics, and the latter actually imprisoned for daring to cast doubt on the orthodox creed. Even in the face of these enlightened discoveries, the omniscient leaders of the Church still clung to their old-fashioned notions, behaving as though (in the words of Erasmus) "they themselves had been called into consultation when the universe was made." The Old Learning, in short, was rotten to the core. It accepted, as infallible, assumptions frequently ridiculous, and still more frequently false. Its sole concern was to examine the results of such assumptions, never on any account to examine or question the assumptions themselves. It is as if the propositions of Euclid were all based on the hypothesis that a straight line is a curve and everyone were forced by an article of the Creed to accept the results.

Schoolmen and the Recovery of Greek.—Such a condition of affairs could not last; but there was only one thing that could upset it. Scholars could not escape from the Church's authority, for that was all-pervading. But the original sources of knowledge were not wholly lost: to these at least the more inquiring minds might turn,—and they did. Here and there, stowed away on the top shelves of libraries and buried in the dust of long disuse, were precious copies of ancient authors. Some were now unearthed and read. Throughout the passage of the fifteenth century this process of discovery was going on. Scholars too, who brought with them many manuscripts, more especially in Greek, began to travel westwards from Constantinople. That ancient capital of the eastern portion of the Roman Empire had survived the downfall of the western

half. It stood the shock of the barbarian inroads and preserved its culture and learning until now.

In 1453, however, a catastrophe occurred which quickened the departure of Greek scholars for the west. In that year Constantinople was attacked by the Turks, who had worked their way up through Asia Minor, and it fell. To Western Europe its fall was in one way a lucky accident. Upon the approach of the Turks its monks and scholars left the city and took their flight to Italy; and, what is more, they carried with them many of those precious original Greek manuscripts which were now in so much request. In Italy they were eagerly received and their books still more eagerly scanned. What followed seems almost beyond belief. Men opened those musty covers and discovered within them—for the first time in their lives—the sober voice of truth. They were like blind men who have suddenly received their sight, and they went delirious with excitement and joy. Scholars vied with scholars to obtain but a glimpse of the treasures. A great prince, like Lorenzo de Medici of Florence, gathered them to his libraries, caused them to be read aloud at mealtimes, and spent whole days in discussing their interpretation with the scholars he had collected to his court. Whole cities made holiday in honour of the acquisition of a book; and the unearthing of a unique manuscript was hailed with the pomp of a jubilee. It is not too much to say that the Italians went literally crazy over having discovered the Classics.

It must seem strange to us that the so-called “dead” languages should stir men so. Yet to call them dead is really a mistake. Ancient Egyptian is dead, and Anglo-Saxon is dead. But, while these have perished and been forgotten, Greek and Latin have remained and been remembered because they are so stupendously and unforgettably alive. For the Greeks, unlike the Schoolmen, pursued and followed after truth. Their curiosity was unbounded; they desired to know the why and the wherefore of everything. Socrates, their great philosopher, was so inquisitive that the Athenians grew tired of his questions and put him to death. Yet the Athenians themselves, as St. Paul told them, were never content unless “hearing or telling some new thing.” Above all, the Greek thinkers tried to be honest with themselves. They faced the hard facts before they dared to build an hypothesis upon them. They approached nature, not with a blind faith in some orthodox authority, but in the scientific spirit of inquiry; and had they been given time, they were already on the path towards many of our modern discoveries, such as the planetary system and the circulation of the blood.

Renaissance Art.—The Greeks, in short, were always moving forwards: they never stood still. And in their writings is for ever contained a vitalising germ; for they possessed the secret of the quest for Truth. That is why classical literature is still studied to this day; and that is why the Italians were so moved by its revival. The Greek poets were a revelation of wonder to them: Vergil they treated as if he were inspired; and for Plato, the great Aristotle’s master, they experienced



TUDOR HOUSE, COMPTON WINYATES



ELIZABETHAN GALLERY, ASTON HALL

a veneration second only to the Bible itself. Nor did they confine themselves to literature alone. Everything that was Greek or Roman they eagerly sought out. Ancient sites were excavated: battered statues and broken vases were dug up: and all that they found, the Italians set themselves to imitate. They studied the ruins of old pagan buildings, and on that pattern evolved a new architecture of their own. The Gothic vault and pointed arch were replaced by the straight horizontal lines of the Greek Temple or the semi-circular vaulting of the Roman Baths. Corinthian and Ionic capitals were revived, and the ornaments of antique sarcophagi were copied. At Rome a new cathedral, which is now St. Peter's, was begun in this new style; and, though the fashion took much longer to reach England, it was followed by Wren when he rebuilt the city churches and the new St. Paul's.

Art was, in fact, the chief fruit of this Italian Revival. The designer of the Dome of the new St. Peter's was perhaps the greatest of all the Renaissance artists, Michael Angelo. Sculptor and painter and poet as well as architect (for it was he who frescoed the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican), Michael Angelo was a giant among his fellows, a genius who could turn his hand to every art and excel in all. Yet even he could never have accomplished one half of what he did if the Art of the ancients had not been discovered. Even more versatile than Michael Angelo was his contemporary and fellow-citizen of Florence, Leonardo da Vinci. Painting was his true craft; and the picture of the Last Supper in a monastery at Milan was his master-work. But, though first and foremost a painter, Leonardo was much else besides—poet, musician, philosopher and military engineer, a man of tremendous inventive energy, who designed a flying machine (though it did not fly) and anticipated the modern "Tank" by suggesting the manufacture of a "chariot, secure and unattackable, which, entering among the foe with its artillery, there is no multitude of men-at-arms so great that it will not break them; and behind which the infantry will be able to follow unharmed and unhindered." Like a true child of Greek culture, he was of an intensely inquisitive mind, loving all quaint and curious things and jotting down in his notebooks such ideas as took his fancy: how a certain physician "had a steward without hands"; how he had read somewhere of "giants who lived in the sea upon whales, grampuses, and ships"; how "snow taken from the high peaks of mountains might be carried to hot places and let drop at festivals in summer-time." The keen mind of this many-sided genius was a type and mirror of his age; and if to him and Michael Angelo we add their third contemporary, Raphael, we may say that in that trio the highest achievement of Renaissance art is summed.

Renaissance in North Europe.—In these men's minds, however, and in the minds of Italians generally the Renaissance had little or no effect upon Religion. It was not till the New Learning spread northwards that it touched a different chord. The peoples of Teutonic stock are of a different temper from the southerners; and the same ideas which had set

the Italians thinking differently of art, set the students of Germany and England thinking differently of God. In the latter years of Henry VII there was at Oxford University a small group of scholars who felt the fresh breath of the Renaissance and drank it eagerly in. Colet, son of a London merchant, Sir Thomas More, a man of letters and affairs, and Erasmus, an escaped monk from France, were the three leading figures of the group. Like the Italians, they, too, drew their chief inspiration from the Greek. They threw over the glib mechanical interpretations of the Schoolmen's Latin commentaries, and proposed to study the New Testament in the tongue in which it was first written. With the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul they made as it were a fresh start; coming to them with open, unprejudiced minds, and using their own common sense, they drew their own conclusions; and naturally enough their conclusions were by no means in agreement with many doctrines of the Church. Fired with the enthusiasm of their discoveries, these men were not content to keep their ideas to themselves; and each of the trio made his own contribution to the cause of fuller knowledge and clearer truth. Colet founded a school where Greek might be taught and true learning encouraged: it was called St. Paul's, after the Cathedral of which he himself was Dean. Sir Thomas More, whose chief interest lay in politics, wrote a socialist treatise, describing a land which he called Utopia (it means No-where in the Greek) and in which everyone was to be happy, the poor no longer oppressed by the powerful and the rich, individual consciences untrammelled by the bonds of a tyrannous Church. Erasmus' contribution, however, had the greatest influence of all. He set to work and compiled a truthful and accurate text of the original Greek Testament and prepared a new Latin translation of his own. With this he intended to open the world's eyes; and, aptly for his purpose, there had freshly come into being a new art which aided him not a little.

About 1450 printing had been invented. It had spread rapidly; and, while William Caxton was working at Westminster, there were now several presses busy on the Continent. Erasmus' New Testament was printed at Basel in Switzerland and issued to the world. A year or two later certain wiseacres of the old school complained to him that several of his new translations contained heresies in disguise. "You speak too late," was Erasmus' answer. "It is scattered over Europe by thousands of copies." And indeed, heresy or not, there was no stopping it now. The printer's science had revolutionised the world of learning. Where the old monkish copyist had taken half a lifetime to produce one Testament, hundreds could be issued now in a few months; and soon books of one sort or another would be accessible to any but the poorest. When Luther issued his pamphlets to the German nation, thousands were sold in next to no time. If one single thing may be said to have rendered the Reformation possible, it is the printing-press.

The effect of Erasmus' book and of the teaching for which it stood

was almost instantaneous. Hitherto men had viewed life, as it were, through an opaque pair of ecclesiastical spectacles, seen through which the Pope assumed dimensions of a prodigious and terrifying size, the humblest priest appeared as a semi-divine being with a halo round his head, while the mere layman shrunk to the position of an obscure, insignificant and ignorant puppet incapable of thinking or acting for himself. Very distant and very indistinct, yet supposed in some mysterious way to be directing the operations of the Pope and priest, was the figure of Christ Himself; but that figure it was not for the layman to inspect too closely. Then Erasmus spoke; and, behold, the obstruction dropped from the layman's eyes. He saw Christ now very lifelike and distinct, and He was not at all what He had seemed before. He saw the Pope as a very ordinary man and not always a very good man; the priests, too, became ordinary men and not seldom very bad men. More than this the layman became suddenly aware that he himself had a conscience which he could call his own and which, more than all the injunctions and interpretations of the Church, it was his bounden duty to study and obey. And the more the layman thought about them, the less he was inclined to agree with the Church's views. When in breaking the bread at the Last Supper Christ had said, "This *is* My body," the Church held that He was stating an absolutely literal fact, and that whenever a priest blessed the elements at Mass a miraculous transformation or "change of substance" did then and there take place; and yet—had Christ so meant to glorify the function of the priest? Were His words capable of bearing but that one significance?

The layman began to have his doubts. It was not as though in other matters the Church's honesty was wholly above suspicion. She practised only too often on the credulity of the ignorant and superstitious. Any man with two eyes in his head could see how often her so-called sacred relics were a hoax. There were fragments of the true and original Cross scattered up and down the shrines of Europe sufficient by themselves to build a small cathedral. Anyone, too, who cared to make the journey from Amiens to Constantinople would be able to discover that St. John the Baptist's head was preserved in both places simultaneously. Sometimes the deceit was even more gross and palpable. At Boxley, near Maidstone, there was a Crucifix famous for the fact that the eyes of the Christ shut and opened as a sign of heavenly grace. Subsequent investigations proved that this strange phenomenon was due to no more supernatural a cause than a priest concealed beneath the figure, and a pair of strings. Yet even such trickery was as nothing compared with the uses to which the Church's influence was put. Her power to exploit was unlimited and her rapacity incredible. Not content with the vast revenues her lands and properties brought her, she was for ever wringing more money from the pockets of her victims. Did a man lay bare his sins in the confessional, the priest soon had him in his grip, and the price of pardon was not small. Did a dying penitent wish prayers to

be said for the salvation of his soul, there was a tariff. So in a hundred ways money flowed into the Church coffers, to be spent in magnifying still further her already boundless power.

Luther's Protest and the Diet of Worms.—The scandal, however, reached its climax in the sale of Indulgences, which, because it gave rise to a celebrated protest, and so formed the starting-point of the Continental Reformation, must be told more fully. In 1517 the ruling Pope was engaged in building the new church of St. Peter's at Rome, and the idea struck him that he might raise money by offering to all who would contribute to the funds a free pardon for their own sins (or if they preferred) for the sins of their dead friends in Purgatory. A tariff was accordingly made out—sums of money upon one side, the equivalent number of years in Purgatory to be remitted on the other. Agents were despatched to proclaim the offer in the various countries; and on one of these called Tetzl fell the duty of visiting the German towns of Saxony and Wittenberg among them. Now there lived at Wittenberg an obscure monk named Martin Luther, who had long been exercised about the condition of the Church and disliked many of her present practices. Tetzl's mission disgusted him beyond measure and determined his resolve. He drew up a sheet of ninety-five arguments against the Pope's Indulgences, and on All Souls' Day, when it was the custom to offer special petitions for the dead, he nailed the sheet up on Wittenberg's church door.

The act fell like a thunderclap on Christendom. The authorities at Rome were seriously perturbed; they were more perturbed than ever when they learnt that Prince Frederic, the Elector of Saxony, had stamped the act with his approval. Thus emboldened, Luther issued two pamphlets, in the second of which he denounced the Pope himself as a usurper and referred to Rome as the "Kingdom of Babylon." The Pope countered by denouncing Luther as a heretic and ordering the Elector to deliver him up. The Elector consulted Erasmus, whose reply was brief, but to the point: "Luther has committed two crimes; he has hit the monks on the belly and the Pope on the crown." And the Elector decided to stand by the criminal. Meanwhile Luther had not been idle. His blood was up, and taking the Papal Bull or document which proclaimed his heresy, he burnt it in public before a cheering crowd. The Emperor Charles, who had newly been elected, now took the matter up. A Diet or feudal Parliament of the German representatives had been summoned to meet him at Worms (1521). At the Pope's request Charles was preparing to condemn Luther unheard; but other counsels prevailed, and Luther was eventually summoned in person to the Diet. His journey to Worms was nothing short of a triumphal procession. Everywhere the crowds flocked out to greet him and cheer him on his way. Yet Luther believed he was going to his death. His fears were unfounded. The Emperor called on him to retract his heretical opinions. It was plainly hinted that refusal would lead him to the stake—and he refused. But help was at hand. The popular enthusiasm was

boiling over. Rumours came that a rising had begun. A threatening placard was posted on the door of the Town Hall, and underneath was appended the revolutionary watchword of the people—the Peasants' Clog. These demonstrations shook the Emperor; and, though he was far from abandoning his hostile projects, he yielded for the moment. Luther went forth from Worms a free man. The cause of reform had triumphed.



FIG. 22.

Before, however, the German Protestants could make good their victory a long and bitter struggle was inevitable. Besides their ecclesiastical opponents they had other and formidable foes to meet, their feudal lords. The German masses were still in the same condition as the English serfs before the Peasants' Rising; and side by side with the battle for their faith, they had also to fight the battle of their freedom. In the fury of that struggle (and there were bloody massacres and cruel reprisals

upon either side) Luther himself dropped into the background and fanatical prophets took the lead. The Emperor Charles fought the movement with ruthless pertinacity; and, though many of the German Princes joined the Protestant ranks, his victory seemed at one moment almost won. Then suddenly he fell: he was beaten in battle by the French, lost heart, gave up his crown, and retired to a monk's cell. There he spent the remainder of his miserable days cursing the weakness which had allowed Luther's escape at the Diet of Worms. Those of the German States which favoured the Protestant movement had now at length won some sort of toleration for their creed; and, though religious strife was to break out once again in the indescribable horrors of the Thirty Years' War, yet the bulk of Germany had made its choice. It had taken its stand for Protestantism; and Protestant it has remained to this day.

"Erasmus," as the monks complained, "had laid the egg; Luther had hatched it"; and nothing could check the movement now. Switzerland had joined in it, and under the guidance of John Calvin had evolved a type of Protestantism peculiar to herself—a Church governed on democratic principles, in which the congregation rule the minister rather than are ruled. Ere long, too, the influence of Calvin's creed was to play no small part in moulding the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Meanwhile Sweden and Denmark had also achieved their Reformation; and towards the close of the century the Netherlanders followed; nor were the hideous cruelties of their Spanish masters, who burnt and tortured thousands of men and women for their creed, of any avail to turn them from it. Thus of all the Teutonic peoples not one remained obedient to the Pope. Spain, Italy, and France (and even France was shaken) alone held true. Nor is it mere coincidence that these three alone had, centuries before, experienced the imperial rule of ancient Rome. Something in the tradition that had survived through all the changes of these peoples' history, something also, it may be, in their blood, had given them a peculiar reverence for authority which other peoples lacked. It was natural in them to offer the same allegiance to the Pope as they offered to their kings; and nothing but the inevitable growth of the democratic spirit has sufficed or can suffice to turn them from it.

II

The English Reformation.—Henry's Reformation was widely different from Luther's, for the simple reason that England was not Germany. There the country was still in the feudal state, divided by social grievances and local jealousies: the Germans and reformers had to fight their Emperor as well as fight the Pope. England, on the other hand, was a nation which had already composed the ancient quarrel between the nobles and the serf, which had established a timely compromise between the classes, and which had developed a constitutional machinery whereby the King and People could act in unison. Henry at least made Parliament an accomplice in his acts, and though he held, no doubt, the whip-

hand over the country, yet he used his power judiciously; and more than most monarchs he had the happy knack of feeling as it were the public pulse, and prescribing a dose which was at once palatable and appropriate. The result was that the nation for the most part made no bones about the character of his government, simply because it generally gave them what they wanted. So throughout the progress of the Reformation they showed little inclination to resist; and only at one moment, and that a brief one, was there the slightest hint or danger of civil war.

But, though its course was thus rendered comparatively smooth, it must not be supposed that the great movement was carried through without a hitch, or that the precise goal to be attained was manifest throughout a hitch, or that the precise goal to be attained was manifest throughout whither he was going. He was sailing a new uncharted sea, and all he could do was to grope forward, changing his tack as circumstance required. Yet Henry was no drifter: to suppose that he acted from pure impulse or mere motives of caprice would be absurd; a man who was so completely master of the situation must have done a deal of hard thinking in his time. For all that, few men's religious opinions have taken more extraordinary turns than Henry's. He had begun his theological career (some years before the breach with Rome was ever dreamt of) by writing a treatise to uphold the Pope's position against Luther; and this had so pleased the Holy Father that he had bestowed upon the youthful controversialist the proud title of "Defender of the Faith." Then came the quarrel. Henry had followed Luther's lead, and stood where Luther stood, outside the fold. Yet he was still as anxious as ever to "defend the faith." No matter that he himself had now destroyed what was thought its central plank; other planks remained to be upheld; and to uphold them Henry was determined, with all the power at his command. There resulted an extraordinary spectacle; for here was he, arch-heretic himself, burning other men alive for heresy against the Faith, because their opinion did not tally with such parts of it as he had chosen to retain. It as though Ananias and Sapphira had undertaken to chastise their son and daughter for telling fibs.

Nor meanwhile was the lot of those men lighter who refused to follow Henry in his revolt from Rome. If those who went further than he did were heretics, those who did not go so far were certainly traitors, and they suffered the due penalty of their treason. That there was anything contradictory in all this never perhaps occurred to Henry's conscience. His strength lay in knowing his own mind at the moment, and insisting that everybody else should agree with him. He questioned neither the correctness of his own creed nor the justice of his methods of imposing it on others. Force was the only instrument of persuasion known to him: the powers of the Star Chamber could be invoked against disloyalty; the ecclesiastical courts could deal with false doctrine; and Henry used either weapon mercilessly. A Reign of Terror began which only Queen Mary's persecutions equalled. To diverge but a finger's breadth from agreement with the King meant on the one hand treason, on the other

heresy; and the only alternative to compliance were the halter or the stake. Either from apathy or conviction, rather than from cowardice, the vast majority of Englishmen were minded to comply; yet first and last there was no inconsiderable number of martyrs who suffered for a conscience too prematurely Protestant or too conservatively Catholic, and few weeks passed without an execution.

Execution of More.—It was in 1535 that the Terror began, and the victims claimed were among the highest in the land. To his intense annoyance Henry found that, though he was now duly married to Anne Boleyn, some among his subjects still doubted the validity of the marriage. Amongst others a certain celebrated prophetess or clairvoyante, known as the Holy Maid of Kent, was rumoured to have said that the King would not long survive this second match. The evidence was against her: she was condemned for treason, dragged on a hurdle to Tyburn, and there hanged. Implicated in the Maid's fate, however, was a man of no less standing than Sir Thomas More himself, who was said to have been interested in her prophecy, to have conversed with her, and, still more indiscreetly to have made her a present of a double ducat. Since Wolsey's death More had served the King as Chancellor, and had served him faithfully. As befitted a disciple of Erasmus, he was an ardent champion of reform; but reform did not to his mind necessitate a breaking off from Rome, and he would fain have seen the English Church purged indeed of her abuses but still faithful to the Pope. Disapproving, therefore, of Henry's fatal step in divorcing Catherine and wedding Anne Boleyn, he had vacated office and retired into quiet seclusion. Not a word of disloyal protest had passed his lips. "I say no harm," he said, "and I think no harm; I wish everybody good." None the less he was arrested on suspicion; and, together with Bishop Fisher of Rochester, another of Erasmus' friends, he was committed to the Tower.

The two prisoners were not immediately condemned, and they were given a chance to clear themselves. They had only to take an oath to the validity of the marriage and to the King's supremacy in the Church; but they refused. Fisher was too ill to be dragged to Tyburn on a hurdle, for he would never have reached it alive; More was perhaps too great. They were therefore sent for execution on Tower Hill. Fisher was the first to suffer; and More followed shortly after. He was one of the most tender, loyal, and conscientious souls that ever lived; and to the last he never said a word against the King. At the sheriff's request he even refrained from addressing the onlookers in a farewell speech. One quaint protestation of his innocence sufficed; as he placed his head upon the block he drew his beard out of the way, and as he did so said ironically, "Pity that should be cut that has not committed treason." The tragedy of his sacrifice, given for conscience sake and in the cause of a united Church, struck deep into men's hearts. It settled one thing finally: Henry had crossed his Rubicon. He had destroyed the last chance of compromise with Rome.

Suppression of the Monasteries.—Having thus broken decisively with the past, Henry proceeded apace with his various measures of reform. The spiritual powers of the clergy were already sufficiently curtailed by their subordination to the Crown's authority; they were told on what lines to conduct their services, bidden to preach a sermon against the Pope at stated intervals; and very few showed any hesitation in transferring their obedience from their old Pope to the new. There remained, however, the monasteries, sheltered by their long immunity from outside interference, and rendered immensely rich and powerful by the lands and properties they had amassed through many centuries.¹ These were a blot on the fair landscape of a reformed England; and Henry determined to remove them. Now no one will ever conclusively determine whether or no the monks deserved their fate. It is certain that in the past they had been great benefactors to the twin cause of charity and culture. They had cared for the sick and dying, when public hospitals did not exist, entertained travellers in days when inns were rare. They had improved the art of agriculture, copied manuscripts, kept chronicles, and taught the children of the poor, who else had lacked a schoolmaster. In manifold ways they did good service which would otherwise have gone undone. But times had changed—in more senses than one. Many of their functions were now served by other means. Their type of education was out of date; manuscripts had been superseded by the printing-press; land needed developing, and the monks were not always the ideal landlords.

Nor, to be honest, were the standards of monastic life so high as they once had been. Men's notions of piety had changed; and they no longer believed that to be good it was necessary to escape the outer world. Had he lived in the twelfth century, Sir Thomas More would certainly have been a monk; but in the sixteenth he saw greater opportunities of usefulness outside the cloister wall. The result was that many of the monasteries were half empty; and those who were attracted thither were not of the highest type. Some of the inmates lived lazy lives, some worse than lazy. The scourge and the hair-shirt were no longer popular penances; and the feast day was more observed than the vigil or the fast. Seeing this, Wolsey, who was no enemy of the clergy, had already suppressed some small and useless houses whose day was clearly passed; and it appeared a simple matter to King Henry to bring an overwhelming indictment against the rest. The fact is, however, that he spoilt his case by overdoing it. Had the charges brought by his agents against the monks been only a tenth part of what they were, they still would have sufficed; there would have been less suspicion of exaggeration to give a handle to his critics; and Henry's treatment of the monasteries would meet with less censure now.

He began by putting the whole matter into the hands of Thomas

¹ To gather some slight conception of the amount of land then held by the Church and monks, it is only necessary to recall the number of place names still bearing the prefix Bishop's, Prior's, or Abbot's.

Cromwell, a mean and servile rascal who was serving him as ecclesiastical minister of state; and he charged Cromwell to send out commissioners into the various counties to collect what evidence they could against the monks. The result was even more conclusive than Henry himself hoped. The commissioners spared no pains in their inquiry; they diligently noted all the ill-natured gossip of the countryside which told to the discredit of the monks; and the Black Book, as their report was called, revealed a tale of depravity, drunkenness, and vice which would have been a scandal to a London slum. The shepherds, too, were no better than their flock: some abbots were accused of selling church plate and jewels to purchase promotion from the Pope; others of bullying their tenants and making money by the ordination of unworthy priests. Exceptions there naturally were; and of some honest houses the commissioners could hear no ill, catechize the neighbours how they might. But the general verdict was overwhelming; and Henry in his present mood needed no spur.

First, in 1536, he suppressed the smaller monasteries, those, that is, whose annual income was below £200 a year. The larger soon followed; and by 1540 all had been surrendered into the King's hands. About 600 houses in all were thus abolished, and their inmates, who may have numbered some 8000, were turned adrift upon the world. They were not as a rule ill-treated: some were given pensions: a few who had shown defiance or roused the anger of Cromwell or the King offered for it with their lives. The pious old abbot of Glastonbury was condemned for having written a tract against the Divorce some seven years before. He was dragged out on a hurdle and hanged as a traitor on a neighbouring hill; but such martyrdoms were rare; and, even if Henry had been generous, he could well afford to be. Cromwell had promised to make him the "richest king in Christendom," and he was not far wrong.

Use of the Confiscated Wealth.—The plunder was enormous. The estates which the monasteries possessed, reckoned at $\frac{1}{15}$ of the agricultural land of the whole country, passed on their abolition into Henry's hands. Part he kept for himself; but still more he sold or made over to his favourites. To enrichment from this source many of the "new" families, such as the Russells and the Cecils, owed their sudden rise. The King's generosity in giving away what was not his was a deft stroke of policy. It served as "hush-money" and stopped all needless outcry which might otherwise have arisen. Land, however, was not all: there was much rich loot besides; in visiting the monasteries Cromwell's agents had been careful to draw up an inventory of the valuables they found there—enormous quantities of precious stuff, plates and chalices of gold and silver, crosses studded with gems, and all manner of embroidered tapestries and vestments. This was a welcome addition to the impoverished exchequer of an extravagant king. Yet, if only to save his face, Henry was bound to put a part of it to some national use. Wolsey had set a model when years before he suppressed the minor houses, by using the proceeds to found Christ Church, the Oxford College; and it

was clear enough that, now the monkish schoolmasters were gone, some other means of education would be needed. Henry did not do much; but he did something. At both universities he endowed Professorships in Hebrew, Greek, and other new subjects, thus dealing a death-blow to the old, narrow-minded learning. At Cambridge he founded the great college of the Trinity. But this was far from being enough: the need for education was urgent; and in the following reign it was partially supplied by a similar plundering of the churches. The Edward VI schools, such as Shrewsbury, Sherborne, Birmingham, and others, were endowed like Henry's College from wealth amassed by sacrilegious means. It is easier, perhaps, to whitewash the monks themselves than to condone the methods by which they were evicted and despoiled; but then, as so often in the course of history, progress moved forward by strange and devious paths.

The Pilgrimage of Grace.—Among the common folk the Dissolution of the Monasteries was not altogether well received, and it led more or less directly to the one serious trouble Henry had with his otherwise obedient subjects. The easy progress of his policies, unruffled hitherto except by the protest of a few brave martyrs, was in fact too good to last. The breach with Rome had been accepted by the masses with astonishing complacency. They had been sorry, of course, to lose Catherine, whom they knew and liked; but Clement VII was nothing but a name to them; and in most English hearts all reverence and affection for the Pope as such had been dead long ago. On the other hand it was a most substantial gain to them to be rid once and for all of the intolerable taxes which had hitherto been wrung from them by Rome, of the heavy fees for funerals and for marriages which they had been forced to pay the priests, of the interference with their wills and rights of heritage which the Church courts had in the past controlled. Henry's reform of these abuses had been popular enough, for they had taken the Englishman on his most tender side, his purse. But for precisely the same reason the Dissolution of the Monasteries had affected them very differently. The townsfolk indeed, now as ever in the van of progress, had welcomed the disappearance of their old enemies and rivals, the abbot and his monks. But the peasants of the countryside had always found the monks good friends. To the monks they were used to bring their little hoards of money for safe keeping, to them they had looked for assistance in lean years, and with them they had found a market for their country produce; so that in many districts the monastery had become the centre and mainspring of the local life. It is not surprising, therefore, that among the northern and north-eastern counties, where monasteries had been particularly numerous, there were growing signs of discontent with the whole movement of reform. More than this, the North still lived, as it were, in a back-water: it was almost wholly given up to pasture, and, unlike the South, possessed few towns. It was conservative, ignorant, and deeply superstitious, and ready to resent even a trifling interference with its accustomed ways and treasured rights.

A mere spark lit the flame. It had been rumoured (not altogether without basis) that Henry's commissioners were about to strip the churches of all their precious properties. It was believed that only a tin chalice was henceforth to be allowed. A chance word gave colour to these fears. In an obscure parish in Lincolnshire, a handsome alms-dish caught the sharp eye of one of the commissioners. "Meeter for the King," he had observed, "than for such folk as these"; and the news of his indiscretion was soon noised abroad. The church bell was rung; the whole neighbourhood was roused; and the peasants flocked together to uphold their rights. Very soon some forty thousand men had been arrayed: Mass was heard, and a banner displaying the Chalice and the Host flew at their head. The restoration of the old religion was the watchword of the day. In those times there was no standing army; but by the King's orders the county militia of the midlanders was raised. Threats of force and a message sent by Henry to promise them redress sufficed to disperse the rebels; but the trouble was not over yet. A certain young landowner of Yorkshire, Robert Aske by name, was travelling at the time through Lincolnshire. His sympathies were with the peasants, and he had joined them. At their failure he fled homewards; but he found that the news of the rising had outrun him. The whole country was ablaze with beacons: the bells were ringing in every parish steeple. The Yorkshiresmen were up; and Robert Aske was taken as their captain. York was seized; Hull surrendered; and the rebels took the southward road for London—and the King.

Yet in truth it was less like the march of a hostile army than a pilgrimage. Abbots went with it; hymns of a sort were sung; and good order prevailed. There was not the least intention to use force provided that their just demands were heard. It was a religious demonstration in favour of the old creed—the creed of their fathers and grandfathers before them; and (what was perhaps still more important) it received, as such, the backing of the squires. Like Aske himself, most of the gentry had little sympathy with Henry's new-fangled ways. No class of men was more conservative; they clung to the customs of the past long after the rest of England had abandoned them; many great families continued to uphold the lost cause of the Papacy until Stuart times; and there were many noble Catholics in the Royalist army which supported Charles I. So it was that squires and peasants were now marching side by side to bring their petitions to the King. At Doncaster they met the levies Henry had sent against them. A halt was called for parley; and Aske produced a long list of the Yorkshiresmen's demands. The gist of them was, briefly, that the Acts which brought the Reformation into being should be repealed forthwith, that a fresh Parliament should be chosen in the place of the Parliament which had passed them and which was suspected of having been packed by the King's men; the whole controversy between the old faith and the new was, in short, to be reopened. Henry, with his usual subtlety, returned an ambiguous answer: If faith meant faith in Christ, then he for one meant to live and die in it. And

meanwhile his commander at Doncaster had given a treacherous promise that justice should be done. Aske and his followers, eager to show their loyalty, dismounted their revolutionary emblems in exchange for the royal badge. The men went back to Yorkshire; Aske journeyed to London to interview the King—and the so-called Pilgrimage of Grace was over. The promises, of course, were never kept, and the opportunity for vengeance was not long delayed. Despite Aske's warnings, some misguided hot-heads reopened the revolt; and Henry, declaring that the pledges of good behaviour had been broken, visited cruel punishment not only on the new offenders, but on the leaders of the first outbreak as well. Aske himself was hung, drawn, and quartered as a traitor. The lesson went home; there was no more serious resistance: and Henry's Reformation went smoothly forward on its appointed course.

Reform of Ritual and Doctrine.—As Head of the English Church he now seemed in a fair way towards establishing religious truth in every corner of his realm. The priests were submissive, the people in part enthusiastic and in part simply apathetic. The only trouble was that Henry himself was not so very sure what he meant by religious truth. What the Holy Catholic Church had hitherto meant by it, every one knew well; but then in one important point at least Henry had differed from the Holy Catholic Church; nor was that all, for he was further conscious that, amid the body of religious doctrine on which the Church had set her seal, there were many other points which possessed neither the sanction of Scripture nor of plain English common sense. Between the chaff and the grain, the true doctrine and the false, it was now for Henry to discriminate. About certain flagrant abuses he had little doubt. Masses for souls in Purgatory he discouraged without actually prohibiting. The worship of Saints, who had tended more and more to divert men's thoughts and prayers from approach to Christ Himself, he also judiciously curtailed. On the use of images and shrines, which had long since developed into a species of idolatry, he was even more severe; and orders were issued through Cromwell for their prompt destruction. The Boxley crucifix, of which we spoke above, was broken down and the secret of its curious mechanism exposed to vulgar eyes. The shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury, so long the favourite object of pious pilgrimage, was desecrated and the martyr's bones scattered to the winds; and throughout the country the work was now begun (though not now completed) which has robbed the English churches of half their former splendour. Mural paintings were defaced: stained glass windows which contained obnoxious figures were broken; statues were decapitated or bodily removed. So complete had been the devastation begun by the one Cromwell, and finished a century later by the other, that in most English churches and cathedrals little more is left to us than rows of empty niches, colourless windows, and the nakedness of whitewashed walls.

But if by these means the chaff of false religion had been purged away, Henry stood upon more doubtful ground when it came to selecting

the good grain. What, for instance, of the doctrine of the Mass, the central tenet of the Church's creed? Was Transubstantiation true or false? Did a genuine miracle indeed take place at every consecration of the sacrament? So the Church said; and yet, if that were true, much else must follow from it, for on that doctrine hinged the whole position of the clergy too. If the clergy did in very fact perform a daily miracle at Mass, then the clergy were something more than simple ministers: they were holy priests, consecrated for a supernatural task, the authoritative mouthpiece of Almighty God and the only fit mediators between a sinful laity and Him. As such, it was also manifest that the priest must rise superior to all worldly ties; and, above all, must not marry; for the Church is the priest's true bride. To all these ideas opposition had gradually been growing, and Luther had brought it to a head. Even in England there were some extremists who, like the later Puritans, were eager to reform the priesthood by abolishing it altogether. Even a church they held to be superfluous, since an honest man's prayers were just as effective wherever they were offered. Saying of Mass they stigmatised as sheer hypocrisy, "a roaring, howling, whining, conjuring, and juggling."

The Six Articles and Cranmer.—Men's opinions were, in short, divided on these points: even in the King's own councils there were two voices heard. Bishop Gardiner of Winchester was for upholding the old doctrine to the letter: Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was for reform in moderation, and it was he who in general held the King's ear. Nevertheless, Henry, too, was in doubt. He was anxious not to go too far or too fast. The rapid spread of heresy (burn heretics as he might) alarmed him; and he saw with pained concern to what lengths the German Protestants had gone. Fearing, therefore, that if he gave too free a rein to his subjects' conscience, he would presently lose what control he had over the Church, he deemed it the wisest course to uphold the full rigour of the old accepted creed.

Accordingly in 1539 his famous Six Articles were issued, whereby, amongst other things, it was ordained that all should believe in Transubstantiation upon pain of burning, that all should make confession of their sins on pain of death, and that priests should never marry. Not even the Pope himself could have taken exception to so catholic a creed (had he only been given a place in it). The "Whip of Six Strings" (as the Articles were called) was at first used with all severity; offences were cruelly punished; and in London a man was even hanged for eating meat on a Friday. Yet in a brief while the whole attempt broke down. The reasons are not far to seek. It was impossible to compel all priests to be single, because a great part of them had wives already. Even Cranmer himself had been twice married. Worse still, the laity were becoming sceptical about the Mass; and this, after all, was nobody's fault so much as Henry's. Amongst other orders which at his instigation Cromwell had given to the priests was the use of English in Church services in the place of Latin. The Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the



THOMAS CRANMER

From the painting by Fliccius



SIR WALTER RALEIGH

From the painting by Zuccero

Ten Commandments were now recited everywhere in the mother tongue: and, what is more important, the Bible was now for the first time put into the layman's hands. Various translations (of which Tyndale's version, the parent of our own, is the most famous) were set in the churches for whoever cared to read. The result was natural. Men soon discovered for themselves that much of the priest's teaching found little support in the actual words of the New Testament. Even the very word *πρεσβύτερος*, which it had hitherto been usual to translate by "priest," turned out to mean nothing more alarming or mysterious than an "elder." The scales fell from men's eyes; and even the brave attempt of the Six Articles to uphold the Catholic creed imposed on few. They were a dead letter almost from the start. Now it was Henry's chief quality as a statesman to know when to bow before a storm. Accordingly he adjusted his opinions to the opinions of the majority; and the process of enlightenment went on unchecked. Cranmer, though attacked by Gardiner and Gardiner's reactionary friends, continued his policy of slow reform. It is said that, before King Henry died, the Archbishop had prepared a measure by which the Mass itself in its old form was to be done away, the laity were to be allowed access to the Cup, a privilege hitherto denied to them: in a word, the great rite of the Christian faith was to remain no longer a mysterious miracle, jealously reserved for the glorification of the priesthood; it was to become, as its Founder had intended, a true Communion in which all might freely share.

Henry's Wives and His Achievement.—The troubles of Henry's latter years were not confined to the questions of his creed. The future of his family had meanwhile been causing him almost as much anxiety as the future of his Church, and he had changed his wives with the same bewildering rapidity as he had changed his religious views; for he was now master of his fate and of his marriages, and needed to wait upon no Pope's approval. His main desire, it will be remembered, was to possess a son and heir who should succeed him on the throne; and this at any rate perseverance into a third marriage had secured him. His first wife, the Spanish Catherine, had given him a daughter, Mary, a strait-laced, self-righteous Catholic like her mother. Though so often used as a pawn in Wolsey's diplomatic schemes and dangled before the eyes of more than one royal suitor, she had remained a spinster; and as a spinster still she was one day to ascend the throne. Anne Boleyn's child had also been a female, Elizabeth by name, the unamiable daughter of an unamiable mother, destined, too, like her half-sister, to be one day queen of England. For one reason or another Henry soon grew tired of Anne. Vowing that only witchcraft could have made him love her, he grasped eagerly at a charge of misbehaviour and sent her to the block. In her place he married Jane Seymour, member of a simple Wiltshire family but with Plantagenet blood in her veins. The son his soul desired was now vouchsafed to him, and Jane died in giving birth to Edward, a sickly child not likely to live long, but still a male. The unenviable post of consort being vacant, Cromwell pressed on Henry

the advantage of a foreign match, and suggested a Protestant princess from Germany. Henry was accordingly betrothed to Anne of Cleves without having first seen her; and, when he saw her, he bitterly repented. She was ugly, stupid, and unable to speak a word of English, and her only accomplishment was needlework—a typical Haus-frau. Cromwell paid with his life for his ill-judged match-making and over-eagerness for quick reform; and the new Queen's Protestant opinions soon gave the cautious Henry the excuse for turning her adrift. Number Five was Catherine Howard, executed on the same charge as Anne Boleyn. Catherine Parr, sixth of this royal Bluebeard's brides and last, survived because her husband died. It is hard to believe that she regretted him.

Yet if Henry had been a criminal, he was at least thorough in his crimes. There was something characteristically English about the pertinacity with which he struggled on (often against odds which must have seemed overwhelming) to ultimate success. He was not one whom conscience troubled much; for he seldom, if ever, looked behind. As piety was counted, he was pious, a regular attendant at the Mass; and, if he ever gave the matter serious thought, he probably told himself that he was doing his duty to his country and his God. Nor is it without significance that he never lost his hold upon the people's heart. To the end, despite all his acts of headstrong cruelty, they retained a lurking admiration and affection for their "Bluff King Hal."

Yet to gauge the true value of his work we must look beyond the narrow limits of his life-time. In Henry's hand the fate of posterity was balanced; and to his statesmanship alone we owe it that the English people had escaped what other nations, less fortunate in their rulers, have since undergone. Very different from theirs has been the history of Spain and France, where a line of selfish despots continued to bolster up their own authority by an unhallowed alliance with the Roman Church. There autocracy and the Papacy worked hand in hand to suppress the cause of freedom; and the fruits of that alliance were ruinous indeed—progress checked, reform stifled at its birth, long years of religious persecutions, and massacres and wars, ending for Spain in a swift and final downfall from her one-time greatness, for France in that terrible upheaval of forces long pent up which we call the Revolution. Despite all the popes and monarchs in the world, the cause of liberty in life and conscience must in the end prevail. Taught by his own experience of papal tyranny, Henry's eyes had opened to this wider truth, and by the light of it he made his choice. He abandoned the old reactionary creed: he chose the new and the progressive. And, seeing all the dangers the English nation has escaped thereby, we cannot but be grateful for the wisdom of that choice, for the broad common sense which foresaw the inevitable, and for the tact which did not refuse it.

While there is much in the history of the English Reformation of which there is but little reason to be proud, yet, when we consider what it might well have been, we may be thankful indeed for what it was. Henry was certainly no saint; in many ways he was a hardened sinner.

But without the aid of his strong practical mind and astute diplomacy England could hardly have avoided the bitterness and violence from which other nations suffered so much. And if Toleration was not then a virtue which anyone approved or understood, moderation and restraint were at any rate a good substitute.

CHAPTER III

THE PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION

An idea sinks slowly into stolid English minds: and the great idea on which Henry VIII had struck was no exception. For the religious change, which he initiated, England indeed was ripe; but it would be an error to suppose that England was enormously impressed by it. There could be no more striking illustration of British apathy and phlegm than the people's calm acceptance of the three successive changes, first of Henry's own bold break from papal tyranny, then of the still bolder venture toward religious freedom which occurred under his son, then again (in strangest contrast) of the final frantic effort made by his daughter Mary to reinstate the lost supremacy of Rome. While the ritual and doctrine of the English Church was thus changing year by year from Catholic to Protestant, and back again, and while a few brave enthusiasts were bearing witness with their very lives to the ardent faith within them, the normal Englishman was well content to keep his own skin whole and his private opinions (if he had any) to himself. Most certainly the normal Englishman was not impressed; and it needed perhaps another eighty years before the lesson of the Reformation went right home and he began in Stuart times to attach a real importance to the questions of ritual and creed. Meanwhile he was busily engaged on the more prosaic but more practical adventure of amassing wealth. For solid industrial and commercial progress the Tudor epoch was unique. The merchants everywhere, but especially in London, were piling up fabulous fortunes. Looms were plying not in East Anglia only, but now also in many northern towns. Sea captains were scouring the oceans and beginning to draw treasure both from East and West. A tremendous energy was afoot, and even the sleepy hamlets of the countryside felt its impelling force.

New Landlords and Enclosure.—A new generation of landlords had arisen—some of them mere upstarts enriched by monastic loot—who farmed not to live but to grow rich. The old-fashioned lord of the manor had been on the whole a conservative and easy-going gentleman: he had jogged on from year to year, using the same methods that his great-great-grandfather had used before him, and (provided rents were paid) leaving his tenants pretty much alone. But the "new man" looked on agriculture with a business-like and scientific eye. When he saw a piece of common land still vacant, he annexed it and put a fence about

it; then, realising that it paid him better to grow wool than grain, he began to increase his acreage of grass. He packed off his tenants who were in the way, dismissed his ploughmen, and turned his whole estate into a run for sheep. Now, however well this plan might suit the landlord's purse, it spelt sheer ruin to the peasantry. Sheep require but few men to tend them; and thus, at the same time as the evicted tenants lost their homes, thousands of hired labourers lost their jobs. A rural exodus began; whole villages stood empty; and churches fell into decay. The "unemployed" tramped the high-roads; and "sturdy beggars" (as these unhappy wanderers were termed) became a public nuisance. The sharpest measures were employed to check it. Vagrancy was made a crime before the law, and men were whipped, cropped of their ears, and sometimes positively hanged for wandering "without visible means of subsistence." It was the landlords' fault, not theirs; but the landlords were powerful and "enclosures" of land went on. The state of the country was quickly growing critical; and, though the strong hand of Henry was sufficient to suppress a simmering revolt, yet there was only too likely to be trouble when the strong hand was gone.

Somerset's Protectorate.—The man to whom power fell at Henry's death was cast in a very different mould from him. Edward was nominally King, preferred before his two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, both by his father's wish and by reason of his sex; but Edward, a fragile though precocious boy of nine, was not of age to rule. He needed a Protector; and of all the sixteen men upon the Council which his father's forethought had provided for him, one stood out pre-eminent. This was his uncle, the queen Jane Seymour's brother; and he it now was who under the title of the Duke of Somerset took up the reins of power.

Somerset was an idealist; and, saying that, one had said the best of him. He meant very well, and, like many who are well-meaning, he failed very badly. The truth is that his generous, philanthropic soul was too good for the age in which he lived. He actually believed in toleration; he wanted to allow free discussion and liberty of conscience; he practically abolished the treason laws; he looked with favour on the extreme Protestants; and he never even burnt a heretic. The one severity which he allowed himself was the execution of his brother, Lord Seymour of Sudeley. But Seymour was such a good-for-nothing scapegrace that none can have been sorry when his underhand intrigues, his issues of false money, and his flirtations with the Princess Elizabeth were brought to this sudden but well-merited conclusion. Yet even from this strong measure Somerset had shrunk, till he was positively driven into it; he was incapable of strictness; and with the nation, as a whole, he was as soft as butter. His colleagues on the Council protested, but in vain. The Papists, still numerous and powerful, were driven to despair by his easy-going ways, and lamented to see their country following Germany into the Protestant abyss. Every one in his own way began to prophesy disaster; and the prophecy was not far wrong; for the crisis in the countryside was near at hand. The peasants had reached the limits of

The Progress of the Reformation

their patience; murmurs against the selfish landlords grew more insistent; the sound of revolution was in the air. Somerset could sympathise, but he could not govern; and, instead of taking firm, impartial measures to see justice done, he behaved most foolishly. He openly took the side of the poor against the rich. He held a court in London where peasants might bring their tale of grievances. He allowed Cranmer and Latimer to denounce the authors of the "enclosure" from the pulpit. He had a park belonging to his chief rival and secret enemy, the Earl of Warwick, ploughed up for grain.

Such a policy, while it lacked sufficient strength to curb the landlords, merely added fuel to the indignation of the poor. Buoyed up by the idea that the Protector was behind them, they turned on their oppressors. Starting from the Devon border, the insurrection spread through Dorset and the Midlands, till it reached the climax of its violence in East Anglia. Norwich was seized by the rebels; landlords were made prisoner (though not a life was taken); the obnoxious fences which enclosed the landlords' fields were broken down. A local commonwealth was proclaimed in Norfolk, with one Robert Kett, a tanner, as its head; and the hymns and services of the new creed of religious freedom were enthusiastically used. But, happily for England, deep-seated bitterness was absent; there were few excesses; and the quarrel, which in Germany was being fought *à l'outrance*, was here concluded almost as soon as it was begun, by the defeat of the raw rebel army. Unhappily for Somerset, however, this conclusion was not of his bringing. His encouragement of the peasants was in part responsible for the rising; he had shown no decision in the hour of crisis; he had not even taken the field himself. The man whom the Council had sent against the rebels was his own rival Warwick, and from that day forward (1549) the star of Somerset declined, while the star of Warwick rose. By the autumn of the year the Protector's waning popularity had vanished. His colleagues on the Council turned against him: he fled with the boy king to Windsor, but was arrested and committed to the Tower. Warwick stepped into his shoes.

Northumberland's Excesses.—The Earl of Warwick, or Duke of Northumberland as he was soon to be, was as bad and unscrupulous a man as Somerset was good and honest. A contemporary writer calls him "the English Alcibiades," and the comparison does more than justice to the Englishman. The character of his rule was soon disclosed. He armed the great lords against the peasantry; he punished brutally; he revived the old treason laws which Somerset suppressed; and two years later he had Somerset's own head cut off on a baseless accusation of conspiracy. It is said that the folk around the scaffold crowded to dip their handkerchiefs in the good man's blood; and at least they must have begun to realise that the change of masters was only for the worse. Nevertheless it was at first an open question what Northumberland's religious policy would be. The Papists had hopes of him: the Protestants, for their own reasons, had the same. Northumberland was

not much interested in creeds; and he chose the line which offered him the best opportunities for plunder. He swept from power both Papists and moderate men alike, and with the aid of the Protestant extremists he concentrated his whole attention upon loot. The churches and chantries, which Henry and Thomas Cromwell scarcely touched, were made to disgorge their wealth. Bells were taken from the steeples, lead from the roofs; everything of value was removed. Candles and crosses, plates and chalices, all went into the new "Reformer's" melting-pot; and indeed it is significant that Northumberland's measures of "reform" were designed to render such properties superfluous. Moved by what motives we may shrewdly guess, he had given the extreme Protestants their head; and they were prepared to out-Luther Luther now.

It would be a great mistake to think that Henry VIII had completed the work of the Reformation at his death. He had settled the fact that Englishmen were to be Protestants: he had not settled what form their Protestantism should take. As Henry left them, the services of the English Church did not greatly differ to the outward eye from the services of forty years before. Mass was still said in Latin; the miracle of Transubstantiation was still nominally believed; vestments were worn; prayers were said for the dead. The more eager reformers, who would have wished to sweep all such ceremonies away, had been disappointed. Henry's pace was too slow for their liking; and yet his deliberation had served the very useful purpose of a brake. As was now to be seen, the brake being once removed, things went too fast. Under Somerset's easy-going, liberal-minded rule, Cranmer had taken the first step forward. He had compiled and with his own hand largely written the first English Book of Common Prayer. It consisted mainly of translations from the old Latin breviary and mass-book. Out of the seven daily services known as the Hours, which the mediæval Church had used, the new Matins and Evensong were put together. The Communion Service was altered and rearranged from the old Latin Mass, which henceforth was declared illegal. Yet, though Cranmer's Prayer-Book was based upon traditional lines, the spirit infused into it was wholly new. The author's majestic Tudor prose, with its stately cadences and classic grace of diction, has made it not only a masterpiece of literary English, but also a liturgy unrivalled in any other tongue. On Whitsunday morning, 1549, it was used for the first time in every Church in England.

But the last word had not yet been said. Cranmer's work was too conservative to please Northumberland's partisans. Foreign preachers from Luther's Germany and Calvin's Switzerland were pouring into England; and these Hot-Gospellers, as they were nicknamed, brought with them much more advanced ideas. Cranmer sank into the background, and Bishop Ridley of London became Northumberland's spiritual adviser. Ridley undertook a revision of the Prayer-Book, and very thoroughly he did his work. A clean sweep was made of every detail which savoured in the least of Popery or superstition. Amongst other things, priestly vestments were to be abolished; the altar was to be

removed from its eastern sanctuary, and, to make quite clear that it was nothing more mysterious than a table, placed in the body of the church. Even the sentence used at the distribution of the sacrament was changed. In Cranmer's Prayer-Book the priest's words had been: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." In the revised edition it stood thus: "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving." In other words, the Communion was no longer a miracle: it was not even a symbol of supernatural grace: it was simply and solely an act of devout commemoration.

The pendulum had swung forward with a vengeance; but before many months were over it was to swing back again—beyond Cranmer, even beyond Henry—to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. The fact was, the reformers had gone much too far. Ridley's zeal and Northumberland's indifference had outpaced popular opinion. On every side the Government encountered nothing but distrust, and even their own supporters were beginning to grow cold. Then a worse blow fell. At this moment, just as he was coming to an age when he might make his influence felt, the young King's health, which had never been too strong, began to fail. In 1552 he had been attacked by measles, then by small-pox; and next year he developed unmistakable symptoms of consumption. It was evident that before long he would be dead. By his father's will, his sister Mary would succeed him; she was notoriously a friend of Rome, certain to make short work of the Reformer's plans; and then—who would give a fig for Northumberland's own chances of survival?

The Reign of Lady Jane Grey.—Northumberland had not long to make his plans, and he did not dally. Under his influence Edward drew up a new will excluding both his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, from the throne; and for an heir the young King went to a side-branch of the Tudor line. Forty years before, in the reign of Henry VIII, it will be remembered that Henry had given his young sister in marriage to the aged king of France. On her royal husband's death the girl had made a love match with the Duke of Suffolk: the pair had wedded, and it was on their granddaughter, Lady Jane Grey, that Northumberland had fixed his eye—and not without good reason, for he had just arranged a betrothal between this lady and his own son, Guildford Dudley. It would have suited Northumberland best of all to see his daughter-in-law written down future queen. But Edward would not do that, and his new will bequeathed the crown, not to Lady Jane herself, but to "Lady Jane Grey's male heirs." This was useless for Northumberland's purpose, for no such heir was likely to be born before King Edward died.

What happened next we do not know; but the will, which still exists, is altered in an unknown hand; and it now runs thus:

and her

"To Lady Jane Greys [^] male heirs"

and that made all the difference. The will and the alteration were completed just in time, for within a month Edward was dead. In accordance with the second version of the will, Lady Jane was proclaimed queen, with young Guildford Dudley as her consort. So far Northumberland's intrigues had triumphed—a triumph which lasted just over a week. In laying his plans he had left out of account two things—Mary's pluck and the universal hatred of himself. Mary had fled for her life on Edward's death; she covered a hundred miles on horseback into Norfolk, and thence issued her rival proclamation. All parties rallied to her: Papist or not, she was her father's daughter, and one true Tudor meant more to the English heart than all the Greys and Dudleys in the world. In nine days' time Mary reigned in England: within a fortnight Jane, Dudley, and Northumberland himself lay prisoners in the Tower. Within yet a month again Northumberland was beheaded: he was far too dangerous to let live. Next year brought Mary an excuse for dealing with the others. A Kentish squire named Wyatt raised a Protestant revolt and came within an ace of capturing London. The Lady Jane had no hand in the affair, as she had had no hand in Northumberland's intrigue to set her on the throne. But her innocence was nothing to Mary. She was condemned to the scaffold, and died within an hour or so of seeing her husband's dead body carried back. Already Englishmen were learning to repent the day when they had refused her as their queen.

Mary, Philip, and Catholic Persecutions.—It was not realised at first that in their haste to be rid of a Protestant thief they had run into the arms of a Catholic fanatic. Folk had fondly imagined that Mary would be content to restore the Church to the state in which her father Henry left it: they never dreamt of a complete return to Rome. But Mary was not one of those who will do anything by halves. As a child of the Spanish Catherine she was doubly a Catholic by both birth and breeding. Deeply, therefore, as she was wounded by her mother's divorce, its religious consequence, the Reformation, had yet more embittered her against her father and her country. This bitterness had grown with years. Disgraced and practically disowned by Henry, she had spent a weary, solitary life in lonely manors, brooding over her wrongs and her religion till she had sunk into a chronic mood of morbid melancholy. But the Spanish blood in her was hard and fierce; and in her tardy accession to the throne she saw not merely a just revenge of fate, but a divine call to correct the nation's backsliding with the sharpest chastisement she could command. Nevertheless she did not, on becoming Queen, at once disclose her hand. True, she repealed the religious acts of Edward's reign; she released that staunch old Catholic, Gardiner, from the Tower, to which he had been committed, and put Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley there in his stead. But as yet she did not declare openly for Rome: more power would be needed at her back before she could reverse her father's supreme act of heresy.

That power, however, was soon to be supplied. Mary's thoughts ran naturally on Spain. Renard, the Spanish ambassador, had shown her

a handsome portrait of his young Prince Philip. Hints were dropped that he would make her a convenient and agreeable husband; and ere long Mary's imagination had been fired. She had fallen in love with the very idea of the Prince Philip. English opinion was not unnaturally dismayed at the proposal, and Wyatt's rebellion was only one of several protests raised against it. But at the Spanish Court there was no such disinclination for a match so advantageous to themselves; and, though there was some haggling about the terms of settlement, the marriage was arranged. Philip was shipped over, and (since he suffered badly from sea-sickness) landed at Southampton as the nearest port. Mary received him at Winchester; and there, in Gardiner's own cathedral, they were married with full Catholic ceremony and pomp. Philip, as it turned out, was not the ideal husband Mary pictured; he displayed but the most superficial interest in his bride; and a year later, giving a lying promise to return, he abandoned her and England to take up the crown of Spain. His callous behaviour towards Mary was one of the many blows which slowly broke her heart.

But, however dismally it failed as a domestic venture, yet in its religious and political effects this marriage was the most momentous of the epoch. It made a deep and lasting impression on the English mind, and it nearly changed the whole course of English history. Its consequences were twofold; and the most immediate and most tragic was religious. With the whole power of Catholic Spain behind her Mary now felt certain of her ground, and she declared without more ado for Rome. Parliament, eager to preserve the monastic lands at least in their present ownership, made a mean compromise and acquiesced. The Pope obligingly consented to receive the erring country back into the fold. He withdrew the interdict of excommunication, and sent over Cardinal Pole as a legate to bestow his blessing and absolution on repentant England. Englishmen, however, were anything but repentant.

In taking Mary as their queen they had never bargained for this, and Mary soon found that there were a large number of "heretics" who refused to accept the old creed. Burnings accordingly began anew, and amongst the first to suffer were the two ardent reformers, Latimer and Ridley. They met their death at Oxford in 1555, and Cranmer soon after followed them to the stake. In mortal fear he had originally recanted his Protestant beliefs; but, finding that not even this surrender would avail to save his life, he astonished the judges who had met to hear his recantation read by unconditionally withdrawing it. There is no need to recount here the well-known story of his death or how he bravely thrust into the flames the right hand which had signed his weak surrender; nor does it behove us to dwell upon the unspeakable sufferings of his many fellow-martyrs—some of them nameless, most of them obscure—who refused to go back on their beliefs. In all some 280 souls thus perished; and it is a clear proof of the widespread influence of the new teaching that of this number 230 belonged to the labouring class. Nor was the example of their sacrifice lost upon the world. If Latimer

and Ridley had indeed "lighted a candle in England not to be put out," it was these humble and unremembered heroes who kept its flame alight. For Mary had strangely mistaken the character of her countrymen; for the surest way to make Englishmen want a thing is to forbid them to have it; and the sole result of the Catholic persecutions was to make men care for the new creed as they had never cared before. Far more than her father Henry, more than Cranmer, Somerset, or Northumberland, it was Mary herself who rallied all future generations of Englishmen to the defence of the Protestant faith.

Such, then, was the religious result of the Queen's Spanish marriage. The other was political—a yet more serious menace to English liberties, and one which for many years to come cast over the country the shadow of a great fear. The young Philip, so innocently welcomed by his loving bride, so affable in his behaviour to his new countrymen, was in reality their most dangerous foe. Sooner or later the death of his father Charles was bound to see Philip seated on the throne of Spain—the most powerful monarch in the Old World and sole master of the New. And when that day dawned it would go hard with England to escape the net outspread to catch her; and inevitably, as it appeared, she would be drawn into the grasp of Spain. At worst her fate might be to lose her independence altogether and sink into the position of a Spanish province like the Netherlands. At best she would be entangled in Spain's continental policies and forced to take Spain's part in the interminable feud with France. True it was that, when the marriage settlement was made, terms had been carefully inserted to preclude such possibilities. But what trust, after all, could be placed in a Spaniard's word? For all his assumed affability, Philip never once took his eye off the English crown, not even when Mary was dead and buried and the crown firmly set on Elizabeth's head. Nor did he scruple to disregard his pledges and draw England after him into a war with France.

In 1555 Charles, the great Emperor King, had retired into a cloister, resigning his power in favour of his son, and Philip ruled in Spain. The very next year Mary was persuaded to assist her husband in a rash attack on France. She was bitterly to repent it. The attack provoked a French counter-blow at Calais—the last remaining foothold on foreign soil. Mary's fleet was not ready; no succour was sent; the Calais garrison surrendered at discretion; and the prize, won long ago by the Duke of Creçy, was lost to England for good. Such was the first misfortune (and it was not by any means the last) which Mary brought upon herself and by her fatal Spanish match. She herself did not long survive this humiliation. Deserted by her husband, hated by her subjects, and overburdened by the consciousness of failure, she died in 1558, of dropsy and a broken heart. "All the churches in London did ring: and at night men did make bonfires and set tables in the streets and did eat and drink and made merry for the new queen"—her sister Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's Compromise.—The last chapter and the most tragic in

the English Reformation was now ended; and Englishmen had mastered their lesson. The twofold experience of Protestant excesses and Catholic cruelty had taught them to seek safety in a middle course; and it was a middle course that the new Queen offered them. For the task of settlement she had much in her favour—a country eager for religious peace; at her elbow, William Cecil, cautious, cool-headed, wise;¹ last and not least, her own inimitable common sense. Thus armed, she looked around her, studied opinions of every various shade, extremists and conservatives, Hot-Gospellers and moderates; and she made a compromise. The tenets of her new creed were carefully defined in the Thirty-nine Articles, which still to this day sum up the doctrines of the English Church; and in the Second Prayer-Book of King Edward's reign, revised, slightly altered, and adopted. Not every party could be fully satisfied; but none (except the Catholics) were outraged; so Elizabeth's settlement embraced them all. One instance of its wisdom must suffice. On the vexed question of the sacrament we have already seen how two different views were held, expressed in the two sentences quoted above. Elizabeth rejected neither of these two alternatives. She incorporated both; and in her Prayer-Book the two sentences went down together, for men of either party to make of them what they chose. And to this day the English Church is satisfied.

But, however broad-minded in her statesmanship, Elizabeth did not fall into the error of Somerset's lax and easy-going ways. She meant her subjects to accept her creed; and by the Act of Uniformity, which she now passed, she made attendance at church compulsory for all. Those who refused to attend—the Recusants, as they were called—were fined; but, provided that the fine was duly paid, further awkward questions were not asked. The penalty was first fixed at one shilling, but was later raised to twenty pounds a month. For absentees increased; and before her reign was over trouble was coming, not from the Papists only, but from the rising sect of out-and-out Protestants, called Puritans. In truth, the religious quarrel (as the Stuart kings were to learn) was by no means over: it is not over yet. But the first movement at least had now begun towards religious toleration. Men were learning to respect each others' consciences; and the Elizabethan Prayer-Book, it is to note, while offering supplication for Jews, Turks, infidels, and here yet makes no mention of the Papists—at any rate by name. England as usual, was first in the field. At that very moment Spaniards, burning Flemish Protestants by thousands in

¹ See Plate XII.

CHAPTER IV

ELIZABETH, PHILIP, AND MARY STUART

I

Hearts were light and bells rang merrily at Elizabeth's accession; and even the nightmare of the previous reign was half-forgotten in the happy sunshine of her settlement. Yet men were gravely wrong if they imagined that all storms and troubles were now overpast. Fresh clouds were already lowering over Europe; and through the coming years echoes of fierce conflict between the old creed and the new rolled fitfully beyond the dark horizon; till at last in a gathering climax the storm swelled to a tornado and, sweeping threateningly against England's shores, broke there—and was shattered.

Philip and the Netherlands.—At the very moment when the young Queen was quietly setting the seal upon the Protestantism of England, the heads of Catholic Europe were elsewhere busily preparing for the struggle, never yet abandoned and now soon to be renewed with a fresh vigour, against the enemies of Rome. The last advice of the Emperor Charles, as he committed the Spanish crown to his son Philip, had been an injunction to fight the spread of heresy to the very death. So it was that Spain became henceforth, under Philip's guidance, the most stalwart upholder of the Papacy; and the whole strength of that great and warlike nation was pitted against the rebellious consciences of Luther's and Calvin's followers. Fire and sword were not, however, the only weapons upon which the Roman Church relied. She had faced the religious upheaval, which her own internal rottenness had caused, by a sincere attempt to put her house in order. In 1563 there was concluded at the town of Trent, in Southern Germany, the final sitting of a famous conference. There for some twenty years (though not without long delays and frequent intervals) the leading champions of the Roman Catholic creed had been at work. By measures of firm discipline they had removed many of the more scandalous abuses which had grown up within the Church. With infinite labour they had studied and re-studied the various articles of faith which the Protestants had denied. With the most patient thoroughness and in the precisest formulæ they had defined the one and orthodox religion, which it was every Christian's duty to accept and which it was rank heresy to deny; and upon all who should deny it they declared from that day out a truceless war. From the Council of Trent the Romanists, in fact, went forth as to a new Crusade—a Crusade upon all heretics; and something even of the old fighting spirit of the Templars was reborn in the new religious order founded about this time—the Society of Jesus.

The order took its rise from a single man's enthusiasm. A mere accident—the chance blow of a cannon-ball which maimed his leg—had

turned a certain young Spanish nobleman, Ignatius Loyola by name, from soldiering to the religious life. After long years of fasts and vigils and mysterious trances, Loyola's imagination had conceived the great idea of a band of devoted spirits sworn to defend the Church against her foes. His burning zeal had proved infectious: and soon the Jesuits (as his followers were called) were to be numbered by their thousands. All over Europe they spread the influence which their matchless organisation and strict ascetic discipline afforded them. Some founded schools. Some preached. Some became advisers at the courts of kings and past-masters of political intrigue. There was scarcely a scheme of persecution or repression but Jesuits pulled the strings. There was no crime or double-dealing to which they would not stoop, holding as they did that the means, however infamous, were justified and more than justified by the great end they had in view—the final triumph of the Roman Church. Toleration was to them unthinkable. Under Jesuit guidance the terrors of the Inquisition reached their height. In Spain, and in countries which Spain ruled, no suspected heretic could now escape: he was haled before a tribunal of masked and hooded judges, cross-examined, racked, and tortured till he recanted his beliefs, or, failing that, was committed to the stake. Yet, strange to tell, the germ of heresy refused to be stamped out. It grew.

The truth was, that the more the Protestants were persecuted the more trouble they were likely to provide; and this the Spanish King was soon learning to his cost. In Spain itself, it is true, he was able by stern measures to keep the movement down; but not so with the subject provinces of Spain. In the Netherlands, now the hereditary appanage of his crown, Calvin's teaching had fallen on fruitful soil. The men of the Low Countries were a progressive, prosperous race. Thanks to a thriving wool trade their towns were numerous; and, as in England, the townsfolk were naturally eager for religious freedom. So, although the south-western districts (which we now call Belgium) lagged behind, the north-eastern districts (which we now call Holland) were soon keenly Protestant. This was a bitter blow to Philip; and on quitting England he had spent some years there in a brave but fruitless effort to stem the rising tide.

After his departure things went from bad to worse; the mob broke loose; they stormed the Catholic churches, and destroyed the images and shrines. Philip at length resolved on severer measures, and in 1567 he sent a Spanish army to the Netherlands, putting the ferocious Duke of Alva in command. Years of unimaginable horror followed. Alva was determined, if he could not convert the heretics, at least to wipe them out; and during his governorship he boasted that by burning, axe, or torture he had first and last accounted for 18,000 lives. Yet for all that the Netherlanders clung staunchly to their creed; and meanwhile, across the border, France, too, was in the throes of a religious war. The late king, who died in the year of Elizabeth's accession, had left but three feeble sons behind him; the eldest of these was still a boy; and the real

responsibility of government had fallen on the old king's widow, Catherine de Medici. Unlike Philip, Catherine was chiefly exercised by the growth of the Protestant party within her own dominions; for the Huguenots, as they were called, were yearly gaining strength in west and south-west France. Catherine herself was no fanatic for Rome, and she would fain have let things bide, had it not been for the great Catholic family of the Guises, who were bent upon firm action. Their influence was too much for Catherine, and in 1562 they pushed her into civil war against the Huguenots. At this all the most bitter passions were let loose. Wholesale massacres took place; leaders on either side were treacherously murdered; and, like their friends of the Low Countries, the Huguenots were sorely pressed. There remained, however, one hope. For the first time (but by no means the last) in history, eyes turned across the waters of the Channel for help against oppression. Both Huguenots and Netherlanders alike looked in their hour of need to their fellow-Protestants in England. They appealed to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's Neutrality.—For a young Queen, barely beyond her girlhood and already burdened with the heavy task of composing the quarrels of her own distracted country, here was a nice predicament. The two giant powers of Europe were closing on their victims; and little England was expected to defy the giants and run to their assistance. Sentimental reasons there doubtless were in plenty for taking up the cause. Protestants in England and Protestants abroad were fighting the same battle. Friendship with the Netherlands was an old and honourable tradition; and, what was more weighty still, the Flemish wool trade put much money into English pockets. Nor were there wanting those among her intimate advisers who urged Elizabeth to act. Of all those upon whose counsel Elizabeth relied, there was none more balanced or far-sighted than Sir William Cecil, her Secretary of State, and for a full forty years her right-hand man. Cecil was indeed the soul of caution, a man without enthusiasms, cool where others were excited, never to be blinded by prejudice or passion. Yet his very gift of foresight made Cecil keenly conscious of the peril in which England stood of an attack from Spain or France. Sooner or later (and it might be very soon) he saw that there must come a day of reckoning, when a last bid would be made to recover his country for the Roman Church; and there were times when he longed to take time by the forelock and strike at Philip while his hands were yet encumbered with the Netherlanders' revolt. To fight now in alliance with Protestants abroad seemed infinitely safer than to fight single-handed some years hence; and many beside Cecil thought it but common prudence to join forces with theirs before it was too late. So, too, thought Elizabeth in 1562, when the first Huguenot appeal arrived from France and she answered it by despatching an expedition to Le Havre. The expedition, however, failed disastrously, and its failure taught Elizabeth the lesson of her life. Henceforth one fixed idea, to the exclusion of all others, was stamped deep on the Queen's mind. That idea was Neutrality. No matter what might



QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER COURT VISITING BLACKFRIARS



AN ELIZABETHAN MANOR HALL

happen on the Continent, no matter how Philip might bluster or the Huguenots might plead, she would never be drawn into a war against her will. For a whole quarter of a century, and despite all manner of temptations to abandon it, the Queen maintained that policy; and, looking forward to the day of her final triumph, we may well be grateful that she did.

It was a difficult, delicate game to play; but showy or magnificent it assuredly was not. Much sober self-restraint was called for; and Elizabeth's diplomacy, while it was the constant bewilderment of her opponents, was also not seldom the despair of her friends. The price of peace was often hard to pay. Elizabeth stooped very low to pay it. She bluffed, prevaricated, and told lies by turns. She seemed to have lost all sense of decency and pride, sometimes of honour too. Such considerations troubled her mind but little. High principle was not a strong point with the Tudors; and most men of those days scoffed openly at virtue, making it their rule of life to feather their own nest and to cheat their neighbours, if they could. But in an age of cynics Elizabeth was the most hardened cynic of them all—a cold, coarse-grained, calculating nature without a spark of generous warmth or even pardonable passion. Henry VII, her grandfather, had been thrifty, when thrift was wanted; but Elizabeth seemed often to be stingy for stinginess' own sake. Henry VIII, her father, had been obstinate and cruel; but he at least took risks with a full-blooded bravado which was altogether foreign to his daughter. Anne Boleyn, her mother, had been a desperate flirt; but, though Elizabeth herself played fast and loose with perhaps a score of suitors, towards none did she betray one hint of genuine feeling: her heart was never touched. In short, the qualities of her nature were so hard and masculine that some even imagined her to be a man masquerading in a woman's clothes. Yet for the task before her those qualities were needed; and, though her wits were matched against the most cunning brains in Europe, she managed in the long run to overreach them all.

Alliance with France.—The mainspring of her continental policy was once more, as with her father, the Balance of Power. France and Spain were still jealous rivals, and Elizabeth worked upon that jealousy by discreet attention to the weaker side. But, though she was playing the game which Wolsey had invented, she played it with one significant variation. In her hands she held a card that the old Cardinal had never held. She, the Queen of England, was a *spinster*. So far as we can guess she intended to remain so; but luckily for her no one at the time knew that. Her hand was therefore an unrivalled bait for foreign diplomats; and every court in Christendom showed an almost indecent haste to provide her a suitable husband. Elizabeth encouraged their offers and fooled them each in turn. Philip of Spain was himself the first in the field. As her late sister Mary's husband he felt his claim to be strong; and in imagination he saw England already well within his grasp. For Elizabeth, however, her solemn, sour-faced brother-in-

law possessed but few attractions; she had no intention either of harnessing her country in perpetuity to Spain; and to Philip's great disgust she rejected his proposal out of hand. So Philip contented himself with a French princess, and sent his younger brother over on approval. Now Elizabeth was woman enough in one respect: she admired a man's good looks; and, when she heard that Philip's brother was by no means handsome, that in fact he had a head even "bigger than the Duke of Bedford's," she would have none of him. Soon, too, it dawned upon her mind that the Spanish king's attentions boded England little good. Safety demanded that, contrary to all tradition, she should cultivate some understanding with the French. That policy would serve, at any rate, to scare King Philip; and Elizabeth accordingly readjusted her designs. Since her exploit on the Huguenots' behalf she had been regarded in France with well-merited suspicion; but in 1569, though the Huguenots were standing in sore need of her assistance, she turned a deaf ear to their appeals and closed her ports to their shipping. From this it was an easy step to a more definite entente; and in April of 1572 she concluded a defensive alliance with the crown of France. Philip was left out in the cold. Against this Anglo-French connection Spain was powerless.

Within four months, however, almost to a day, a thing happened in Paris which was to put this new-made friendship to a stringent test. The struggle with the Huguenots was for the moment over, and a truce had been called between the warring parties. In spite of this, Catherine de' Medici, led on by the Guises, had determined to deal the Protestants a deadly blow. At the hour of midnight on St. Bartholomew's festival the signal was given. A bell tolled; and throughout the streets of Paris massacre began. Doors were burst open and suspected Huguenots were dragged from their beds to be butchered in cold blood. Hardly even a child was spared. In the provinces the same order was given and the same scenes were repeated. It was said (perhaps with some exaggeration) that 100,000 Huguenots were killed. Catholics rejoiced all the world over. The Pope ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung in Rome: at the news Philip is said to have laughed outright for the first time in his life.

But how, meanwhile, did it strike his sister-in-law of England? Elizabeth was horror-struck. She put her court into mourning. She showed obvious coolness to France; and for the moment she looked almost sympathetically towards Spain. But it would not do: considerations of State demanded otherwise; before many months were out she was accepting the advances of a new royal suitor; and this time it was a Frenchman. Negotiations were begun with the Duke of Anjou, a prince of Protestant sympathies indeed, but none the less heir-presumptive to his brother's throne and hence of great importance. The farce of his courtship was kept up a full ten years, and Elizabeth fooled him to the top of his bent. She donned a fresh dress daily, each more sumptuous than the last; in strange love-language she nicknamed him "her

Frog"; she even danced in private for his edification. From time to time she promised to name the day, and then slipped out of it. And all the while, knowing full well that she would never marry, she enjoyed the spectacle of an infuriated Philip grinding his teeth at her inconvenient tenderness for France. At any moment Elizabeth could have had a war with Spain for the asking. But how successfully she had diverted all thought of attack upon herself was proved in a singular and most conclusive manner. Shortly before the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Pope, who now despaired of winning England back by mere persuasion, had taken a drastic step. He had issued a Bull of Excommunication, and at the same time urged upon both the French and the Spanish sovereigns the duty of launching a Crusade on that misguided country. Nothing was done. Years passed; another Pope succeeded and repeated the injunction; and still the two monarchs never stirred a finger. Thanks to the Queen's ingenious methods, neither knew whether to be more afraid of the other or of her.

II

Mary Queen of Scots.—Yet, if her spinsterhood was the Queen's chief strength abroad, it was no less certainly her weakest point at home. No marriage meant no heir; and if Elizabeth died childless, who was there to succeed her on the throne? The answer to that question was at once simple and disagreeable. One there was near at hand—too near, it seemed, perhaps—who was not merely next-of-kin, but already herself a queen and an ambitious queen at that, and her name was Mary Stuart.

To understand this lady's origin and the basis of her claim we must look back over a good sixty years and more. Towards the end of the fifteenth century a change had been coming over Scotland. The wildness of her clansmen was slowly being tamed; feuds were less violent, forays rarer. But the kingdom was independent still, and to the shrewd eye of Henry VII the time seemed ripe for combining the Scottish and English peoples by a union of the two crowns. He had therefore arranged a marriage between the King James IV of Scotland and his own eldest daughter. Henry's hopes, unluckily, were premature. A single marriage was not enough to make the Scots good neighbours, still less to wean them from their old association with the French. Here lay the source not only of many past but of many future troubles.

It was a time-honoured tradition that, when the French and English went to war, the Scots should chime in and cross the Lowland border. When Henry VII was dead and Henry VIII upon the throne, the news of his expedition into northern France proved too much for James IV, and directly his brother-in-law was out of England he was over the Tweed in a twinkling. His rashness turned to his undoing; for in the desperate fight at Flodden Field he lost both his army and his life. His son, James V, succeeded to a shaken throne, and in the years that followed the defeat of Flodden was sore beset by Scotsmen who betrayed

their country to play the English game. It came to war at the last; for he too crossed swords with his uncle Henry, was beaten at Solway Moss, and died shortly after; not, however, before his wife had borne him an heir, and he left behind him an infant daughter whose name was Mary Stuart. The fate of more than one crown now depended upon whom that daughter wedded. The Protector Somerset had his idea for a husband; and, reviving the old scheme of uniting the two thrones, he suggested his young King Edward. The Scots demurring, Somerset lost patience and marched up to do the wooing with an army at his back. The Scots were badly beaten at the battle of Pinkie Cleugh, but the victory only served to stiffen their dislike for the English marriage, and, worse still, to drive their valuable young Queen straight into the arms of France. It was a black day for England when Mary Stuart became of age to marry and took a young French prince for her husband. It was a black day for Elizabeth (then newly crowned) when that young prince became the King of France and with Mary Stuart as his Queen. It was blacker still when the spirited young couple actually disputed Elizabeth's title to the English crown and mounted the royal arms of England as their own. There was Tudor blood enough in Mary's veins—and Tudor impudence as well—to make this claim look dangerous. But fate intervened. The boy King died, and Mary, left a widow at eighteen, returned disconsolate to her own home. Elizabeth breathed again. Mary as Queen of Scotland was a less formidable rival than Mary as Queen of France. Yet, for all that, her claim still stood. Of Henry VIII's three children, neither Edward, Mary, nor Elizabeth had had a child. If Elizabeth should die or should be overthrown, Mary Stuart was the inevitable heir, and, what gave Elizabeth most furiously to think, Mary Stuart was an out-and-out Catholic.

But though Mary was a Catholic, the country whither she returned on her French husband's death most certainly was not. John Calvin's Protestant teaching had found a ready welcome among the freedom-loving Scots; and, without waiting for royalty to lead them, they had reformed their Church for themselves. Inspired by John Knox, the fiery Protestant preacher, they had adopted novel methods of Church government. Bishops, who had made themselves deservedly unpopular in Scotland, were to be swept away. Ecclesiastical power was to be vested not in priests or ministers alone, but in lay "presbyters" or elders, duly chosen by the congregation. Upon this democratic basis the Presbyterian Church was formed. It received the backing of the Earl of Moray and other Protestant nobles. But it met also with strong opposition from many Catholic chiefs—and not least from Mary Queen of Scots herself. To her it was a sad homecoming when she found herself back among a people, her own kin to be sure, but of an alien creed. The crowd insulted her priest and mobbed her chapel. Knox preached sermons at her which drove her into tears. She seemed utterly helpless and alone. But Mary, unlike Elizabeth, possessed a passionate heart. She was still young enough to find consolation in love; and it was not so much her religion

as her love-making that was presently to rouse her people to dethrone her.

Darnley and Bothwell.—Soon after her return from France she had married a fresh husband, a Scottish cousin of her own, Henry, Lord Darnley. It was a political marriage, and the best that can be said of it was that it produced a son, who, when we next shall meet him, will be James I of England. Apart from this, Darnley brought no happiness into Mary's life: he was headstrong, callous, and immoral. He bullied his wife; and he conceived a jealous hatred of her favourite secretary, the Italian Rizzio. Bent upon removing this foreign interloper, Darnley went to work in a brutally Scots fashion. With a few accomplices of the Protestant persuasion he broke one night into the Queen's private chamber where she was giving a small party to her friends, tore Rizzio out of the Queen's very arms, to which he had fled for protection, dragged him struggling through the door, and stabbed him to death upon the stairs outside.

When Mary hated, she hated fiercely and without forgiveness; and revenge for Rizzio's murder was henceforth her only thought. But she could love fiercely too: and about this time there came into her life the man who was first to capture her heart, then break it. James, Earl Bothwell, was not a pleasant man: he was a coarse, full-blooded, foul-mouthed swash-buckler, with nothing to commend him beyond a dare-devil face, some skill at arms, and the muscular strength of a bull. Yet these were just the qualities which appealed to the romantic imagination of the young and lonely Queen. Bothwell became her idol; and the two lovers plotted together to put her husband out of the way. It so happened that in January, 1566, Darnley was seized with an attack of small-pox, and was lodged for treatment not far from Holyrood Palace in the religious house called Kirk o' Field. There Mary visited him with every token of solicitous affection; and meanwhile Bothwell and his friends were laying casks of gunpowder in the vaults below his room. On 9th February, just after midnight, Kirk o' Field was blown into the air; and Darnley's body was picked up next day in an adjoining orchard. The strange thing was that no marks of fire were found upon him, and it is thought that at the last he met his death by strangling. Popular opinion was shocked beyond all words: nobody doubted but that Bothwell was the murderer; yet, instead of bringing him to trial, Mary eloped with her lover to his castle at Dunbar, and in a few weeks' time became his wedded wife. This drove the Scots beyond their patience: they rose in anger, scattered Bothwell's forces, drove him from the country, and deposed his queen. The Earl of Moray became Regent in the name of her young son, and Mary herself was closely imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle. One more brief escapade and she was to see Scotland no more. A year later the castle keys were stolen for her by a friendly boy; Mary slipped from her prison, rowed in a tiny boat across the loch, and then rallied to her side the Catholics on whom she still could count. She was not long at large: within a fortnight the

Regent Moray was down upon her army, and had crushed it at Langside. Mary herself escaped, a fugitive. One refuge alone lay open. She crossed the Solway, and threw herself upon the hospitality—and mercy—of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth and Mary.—From the first Elizabeth had never liked her rival; she resented Mary's claim to the English throne; and, woman-like, she was jealous of the dark eyes and handsome face which seemed to mock, as it were, the gauntness of her own sour features. Yet the strange chance, which had now delivered the Scots Queen into her hands, was not so welcome as it might appear. Elizabeth, in fact, was caught in a dilemma. To recognize a Catholic as her heir seemed utterly distasteful. Yet what was the alternative? To press her present advantage to the uttermost, to tread her victim down and obey the many voices which urged her to unmask the authorship of Darnley's murder, and visit condign retribution on the guilty Queen, that was a tempting course. The proofs of Mary's complicity were to hand: letters which had passed between her and Bothwell had been captured; and nobody believed her tale that they were forged. Yet the choice, which seemed so tempting, was fraught in reality with serious danger. It must never be forgotten that despite the apparent loyalty of Elizabeth's subjects there were still many traitors in the camp. Up and down the country there was a sprinkling of ardent Catholics who had never abandoned hope. These pinned their faith entirely upon Mary's ultimate accession to the throne. They were ready to resent any injury done to the Catholic Queen, ready even in the last resort to rise on her behalf. Within a twelvemonth of Mary's surrender such a rising did in point of fact take place. Among the northern counties, the old stronghold of the Catholic creed, some discontented earls took up arms in Mary's name. They received no vigorous backing, and the attempt collapsed. Nevertheless Elizabeth's troubles with her awkward guest were far from finished. For now her Catholic enemies abroad perceived their chance. Though France, as we have seen, was reconciled and withdrew her open assistance of the Scots, yet Spain, which was now more an enemy than ever, was not slow to espouse the cause of Mary Stuart. Philip went to work not openly, but by underhand intrigues. Jesuit agents in suitable disguises passed between his court and the Catholic chiefs in England. Schemes to murder Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne were freely canvassed; the bull of excommunication had but recently been issued, and a heretic's life seemed fair game to these fanatics. One plot which Ridolfi, a rich Italian banker, had concocted was discovered only just in time by Cecil's spies; Elizabeth moved in constant peril; she slept with a drawn sword at her bedside. Yet she never betrayed the slightest sign of fear nor flinched for a moment from her elected course. Her choice had been made, and it was typical. Opposing councillors pressed her this way and that. Prudence suggested that she should end the strain by openly acknowledging Mary as her heir; but that seemed odious. Pride urged that she should cut at the source of all these troubles and send Mary to

the block; but that would bring Philip into the open; as likely as not it would mean war with Spain, perhaps civil war as well. Elizabeth did neither of these things: she kept Mary under a strict surveillance, that was all.

Thus both at home and on the Continent she contrived to maintain her policy of peace. The secret of her success lay in nothing else than a masterly inaction, though some would call it by a harder name and accuse her roundly of allowing things to slide. Elizabeth lived in the moment. She refused to look ahead or heed the warning voices. It was sufficient for her to keep Philip at arm's length. The future with all its dangers might be left to take care of itself. Neither plots nor insults roused her. Appeals from hard-pressed Protestants left her unmoved. She was too proud to fight. On the same principle she refused to clinch the problem of the succession to the throne. Mary's claim she would neither accept nor yet repudiate. She would not even marry herself; yet she would not abandon the pretence that she still meant to find a husband. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof: she was content to "wait and see." There have been times in history when such dilatory tactics are doubtful wisdom, but during these critical years they were the means of the nation's salvation. England was weak when in 1558 Elizabeth took up the crown, so weak that she could not even send help to the garrison of Calais across a strip of narrow sea. But under Elizabeth the country did not stand still. Twenty years of peace had given it the chance to find its feet, and it was already perceptibly the stronger; and by the time that the twenty years should have grown to thirty, its strength would at least be doubled. Then when the blow fell, so long and (by some) so nervously awaited, it was to be met by a defence which in the earlier years would have been impossible. Elizabeth had put off the evil day just long enough; and Philip struck too late. It is indeed hard to overestimate what the world owes to the patient courage and cool head of that lonely and much tried woman, called upon day and night for over twenty years to bear the sole responsibility of her country's safety and to take decisions upon problems which would have scared or baffled most statesmen. Yet Elizabeth was not physically a strong woman.

CHAPTER V

THE ARMADA

Events Leading to War.—In the year, 1579, despite all the various threats to her neutrality and despite the strongest temptation to abandon it, England was still at peace. The game which Elizabeth had played successfully for twenty years she was playing successfully still. War was raging as fiercely as ever between Catholics and Protestants abroad; but officially at least the Queen would take no part in it, whether to help or

hinder. Anxious moments, no doubt, there were during the long-drawn struggle between the Netherlands and Spain; but, though she permitted English volunteers to go to the Protestants' assistance, Elizabeth would openly do nothing to give Philip a handle against her. Equally she forbore to offend the King of France by giving the Huguenots any definite encouragement. The French alliance was her most valuable bulwark against the Spanish peril; and, though wink she did at the English privateers who plied across the Channel to the Huguenot ports, she stubbornly refused to take more overt risks. She was sailing, in fact, as near the wind as security allowed, and sometimes very near; but such a course could not be steered for ever. The winds were rising, and, almost before she knew it, the squall would be upon her. During the next ten years events marched rapidly in Europe. One by one the Queen's excuses for neutrality were torn away; and she was forced at last to drop her old evasions and to take her stand for Protestantism against the Catholic king.

1584 was the critical year. It opened in an ominous fashion with Elizabeth's dismissal of the Spanish ambassador Mendoza. A certain ill-conditioned Englishman named Throgmorton had been detected in a plot on the Queen's life. A letter in cipher addressed to Mary Stuart was found upon him, and proofs were forthcoming that, though Spain and England were nominally at peace, Mendoza was privy to the scheme. Elizabeth dismissed the Spaniard from her court; but Philip was at the moment so disinclined for war that he refused to receive him at Madrid. So Spain and England remained nominally at peace, and the cause of the impending rift came from another source, a source which Elizabeth herself had least expected, and which, perhaps (since successful rebellion was a somewhat dangerous precedent), she had never very ardently desired. *The resistance of the Low Countries began to succeed, and Philip correspondingly to realise that it was not in Flanders that victory must be sought.* The Duke of Alva had recognised as much ten years before: and, begging to be relieved of his command, had made way for other men. Slowly the Netherlands had forged ahead. They had shown infinite spirit, standing siege after siege to the utmost limits of privation, and cutting the dykes of their low-lying country to flood the Spaniards out. In 1579 came an even more searching test. The Southern States (which are to-day comprised in Belgium) gave up the struggle, accepting the Catholic religion and the Spanish rule; yet this only served to draw the Dutch States of the north into a closer union. They formed themselves into a confederate league which became the Dutch Republic: and they elected as their first Stadtholder, or President, William of Orange, called familiarly the Silent. Under this great Protestant leader they had fought more stoutly than ever: and in a year or two they had issued a declaration of their independence.

Philip was discouraged. He had hoped to quell the Netherlands before he turned to his attack on England. But he was well aware how much assistance the English people (if not the English Queen) had fur-

nished to the rebels; and he now saw that if the Dutch were ever to be conquered, he must conquer England first. He was in no hurry to begin. But peace hung as it were by a thread. The Anglo-French alliance alone gave Philip pause, and before six months were out France was to prove, for all the help that she might give, a broken reed. For there too, in 1584, a crisis now occurred. The Duke of Anjou died; and the title of succession to the French throne passed thereat to the chief Huguenot leader, Henry Bourbon, ruler of that tiny corner of France beyond the Pyrenees, Navarre. The Catholics were aghast: the Guises would take no chances of seeing a Protestant monarch on the throne, and once again they pushed the wearied country into civil war. France was soon too occupied to look abroad, and as an ally to England she might henceforth be counted out. To Elizabeth, left thus in perilous isolation, there remained but one last resource—Cecil's old policy of alliance with the Protestant enemies of Spain; and if Elizabeth now listened to the Netherlanders' advances, it was not because they were in peril, but because she was herself.

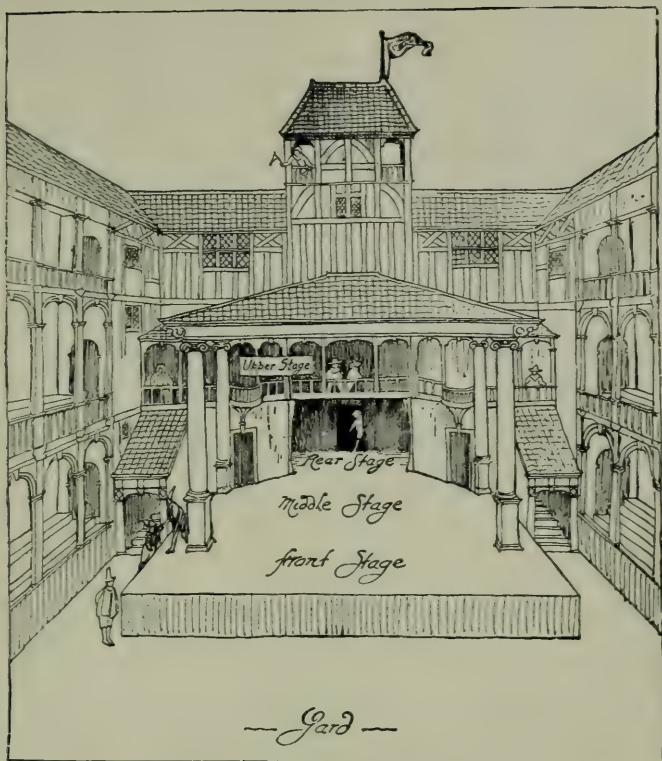
The lists were ready. In London and Madrid the antagonists were preparing. But it still needed a definite challenge to inaugurate the fight. The challenge from Spain came swiftly. In the same month of 1584 in which the Duke of Anjou died, William the Silent was struck down by an assassin, who was beyond all doubt in Spanish pay. There was nothing new, of course, in such an outrage; plots against Elizabeth's own life had been numerous enough. But the Queen, for all her apparent insouciance, was human; and, seeing a fellow-prince thus fall a victim to her enemies, she quailed. Who knew but the same dagger which had struck down William was waiting at her back? Precautions were redoubled; frequent arrests were made; and the public temper grew suspicious and excited.

In such an atmosphere of tension even war is apt to come as a relief: and when at last (with what misgivings we may shrewdly guess) the Queen despatched an army to the Netherlands, she had the entire country united at her back. In 1585 the expedition set sail for Flushing under the command of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. He was an old flame of the Queen's, perhaps the one man for whom she ever cared; but he had little talent. He quarrelled with the Dutch; he was no match for the Duke of Parma, the Spanish veteran commander; and, in the desultory warfare which ensued, he was more often than not the loser. Thus Elizabeth's first intervention in the struggle was by no means glorious: it was redeemed from utter flatness by one memorable incident, the act of Philip Sidney, warrior, gentleman, and poet, who, as he rode off mortally wounded from before the walls of Zutphen, forwent the cup of water which was offered him in a dying private's favour. Sidney by this deed alone made history: Leicester did not; and in 1587 he returned shamefacedly to England.

Execution of Mary Stuart.—Philip's challenge had been given and accepted. It remained for Elizabeth to issue hers. Yet even at this

hour a natural instinct held her back from any desperate or decisive act. She knew that the enemy was not yet fully roused; and she yearned for compromise, or, at the very least, delay. Her subjects, however, were in no such patient mood. With each fresh rumour their indignation mounted; and seeing, or fancying they saw, the Queen's life threatened by a score of plots, they looked with no friendly or indulgent eye upon the dangerous centre of intrigue, the prisoner Mary Stuart. One more provocation and they were to sweep Elizabeth along with them to a stroke which would banish for ever all talk of compromise or peace.

In 1585 Parliament, now thoroughly alarmed by the repeated Catholic plots, had passed a remarkable and quite unprecedented law. Thereby it was enacted that should conspiracy be made against Elizabeth's life, *any person in whose interest it were made* should be prosecuted to the death. The equity of such a law was more than doubtful; but there could be no question at whom this phrase was aimed, and within a twelve-month Mary Stuart was caught in the cunning trap. Elizabeth's secretaries, Walsingham and Davison, had spies upon the watch. A plot was traced to a certain Antony Babington and his friends: their letters were intercepted and deciphered. It is more than likely that Mary Stuart herself was privy to their schemes; but her innocence or guilt was not the question. She was the person "*in whose interest*" the conspiracy was made; and immediately a commission was set up to try her for her life. The Castle of Fotheringay was the scene of the trial. Mary was permitted no advantages of counsel: and her main line of defence was simply to deny the court's authority or power to try a queen. This could avail her little. In the present excited condition of the country no verdict but one could be expected. Mary was condemned to death, and it remained for Elizabeth to sign the warrant for her execution. Yet Elizabeth demurred; much as she disliked her old rival, she disliked still more the responsibility of cutting off a sovereign's head. She took refuge in vague phrases, "If I should say unto you that I mean not to grant your petition," she told her Parliament, "by my faith I should say unto you more than perhaps I mean. And if I say unto you that I mean to grant your petition, I should then tell you more than is fit for you to know." Finally, after two months of intolerable suspense, her reluctant signature was given to the warrant; yet, by an intentional omission, she authorised no one to carry out the sentence. Sick of delays, Cecil and the other ministers took things into their own hands; and on 9th February, 1587, the news arrived that justice had been done. Beacons were lighted; the church bells were rung; and Elizabeth—an actor to the end—pretended to be furious. Rather than shoulder the responsibility herself, she looked around for a scapegoat, and pitched upon her secretary Davison. The wretched man was fined 10,000 marks and imprisoned in the Tower. But whether or no Elizabeth's wishes had been misinterpreted or disobeyed was of little import now. Mary Stuart was dead; and with her death all hopes of a Catholic succession to the throne had vanished beyond recall. Philip was forced at last to face the issue



A SIXTEENTH CENTURY THEATRE



AN ELIZABETHAN GALLEON

squarely. If Protestant England was to be humbled or reclaimed, it could only be by force; and Philip resolved (perhaps ten years too late) that he must strike now or for ever hold his hand. Infinitely daring, he claimed the English crown.

English Seamen.—The Armada was a portent in history. Not perhaps since Xerxes' great attack on Greece had the world seen so vast an undertaking. The preparations which preceded it were enormously prolonged. No less than 130 vessels comprised its armament. Its seamen were considered the most skilful of their age. And when at last the great fleet of stately galleons came heading up the Channel, there was not an Englishman but must have felt in his heart the terror of its might. Set ship for ship beside it, the English Royal Navy must have seemed a puny thing. It was young in years and small in numbers; for little progress had been made since Henry VIII had laid its first foundations, and although he too had started to build ocean-going galleons and had organised a special board of naval experts to control them, his thrifty daughter had ill maintained this heritage. Elizabeth, hard put to it as she was to make two ends meet, had starved the fleet.¹ She grudged every penny spent on construction or equipment; the royal ships in her harbours numbered but thirty sail; and, when eventually they put out to meet the Spaniard, they were short of both gunpowder and food. Yet things were not in reality so black as they appeared, and England, though imperilled by her ruler's lack of foresight, was yet to be saved by the maritime genius of her folk.

What the Queen herself had shrunk from doing, individuals had done upon their own initiative. Private owners had built ships; and free-lance captains had sailed them into every corner of the world. The native spirit of adventure was thoroughly aroused, and Englishmen were already groping forward to find their future destiny as masters of the sea. At first, however, they had lagged much behind their rivals. Fortune had favoured the Spaniards. Columbus's discovery of America had, at the outset, given them a generation's start. Then an obsequious Pope had lent his powerful influence in support of their ambitions; and by an impudent pretension to control the very map, he had assigned the West Atlantic and the whole Pacific waters to the crown of Spain. By the same title Portugal annexed the East Atlantic and the coast of Africa; so that thus early the oceans had been practically barred to English enterprise. But it was not like Englishmen to sit idle in their ports. The spices and silks and precious stones of India and the East beckoned them on; and wits were soon busily at work to discover some fresh passage to the goal of their desire. None of the known routes to India were available: the overland route by the Levant and Suez was under the occupation of the Turks; Portugal was a jealous guardian of the Cape; Spain denied all access through the western ocean. But neces-

¹ During the 16th century the purchasing power of money decreased to an extraordinary degree; and the royal exchequer was very seriously pinched thereby. See Chapter VII.

sity is the mother of invention; and the rash surmise was presently put forward that a passage might still be found to India by way of the northern seas. Shortly before Elizabeth's accession voyages of exploration had been made into arctic regions. They failed, as they were bound to fail. Willoughby was lost off the North Cape; and though another expedition reached as far as Archangel and travelled up country to the

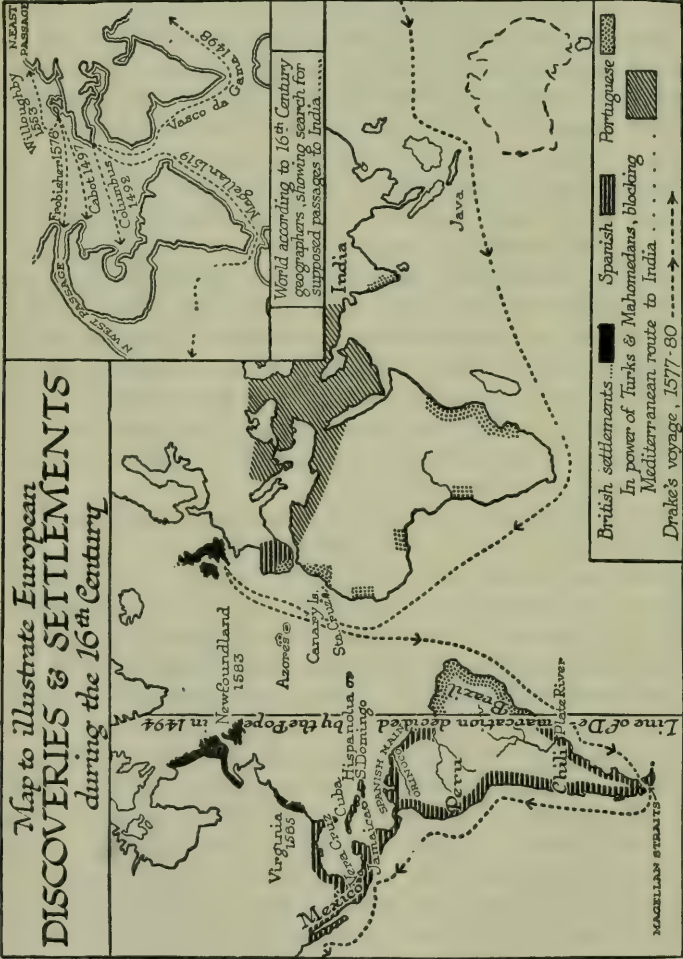


FIG. 23.

town of Moscow, there were small results to show for the adventure beyond a few Russian furs. So the search for "a north-east passage" was abandoned, and similar failure overtook a kindred speculation. Three times the intrepid Frobisher essayed to reach the east by rounding the arctic coasts of North America. He won himself a name, discovered the Esquimaux, and brought back a lump of gold ore. But trifles of this sort made no man's fortune. The fruitless quest had

ere this begun to pall upon the high spirits of Elizabethan seamen; and they were fain to turn aside after some richer game. Now every year inestimable treasure in gold and silver bullion was being shipped across the Atlantic to King Philip's ports. The capture of a single Spanish galleon was worth more than a dozen geographical discoveries; and piracy soon became accordingly the order of the day. Throughout the twenty years and more when Elizabeth was nominally at peace with Spain, her subjects were conducting a private and unofficial war on Spanish colonies and ships.

Drake's Exploits.—For sheer audacity none equalled the Hawkins brothers and their cousin Francis Drake. They carried on illicit slave trade in the Caribbean Sea. They fought a Spanish squadron in the harbour of Santa Cruz. In a hundred ways they plagued the "enemy," till England was ringing with the tale of their adventures. Drake eventually set a cap upon them all. In 1573 he landed at Panama and "held up" the caravan which brought the Spanish gold across the Isthmus from the Pacific coast. His stratagem missed fire, and he returned without the gold. Nevertheless, four years later he was back again, and this time bent on a yet more daring voyage. He struck for the lowest point of South America, passed through Magellan Straits, doubled up along the western coast past Chile and Peru, sacking towns and looting galleons and defying the Spaniards as he went. Thence he struck out west again over the mid-Pacific, put in at Java, crossed the Indian Ocean, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and in 1580 sailed back once more to Plymouth Sound, the first of English seafarers to circumnavigate the world. Philip was furious, and well he might be. Such exploits were not merely a serious insult to Spain's sea supremacy; they were also a costly check upon the transport of his gold. But, bluster as he might, Philip got no redress. By the queer custom of the times, no State was held responsible for independent acts of its private citizens. Elizabeth professed herself unable to perceive where Drake's crime lay, and she entertained him at a banquet. She accepted a portion of the spoils, and finally she created him a knight. The fact is that throughout her reign the sly Queen secretly encouraged this corsair enterprise. Sometimes she lent the pirates ships. Sometimes she furnished them with the wherewithal to build; and, however discreetly she might scold at them in public, she was always ready enough behind the scenes to pat them on the back. Nor did she lack sound motives for this policy. Beside the damage which it did to Spain, it furnished her in the emergency of war with an invaluable volunteer reserve. Though pirates by profession, these men were no less patriots at heart; and once the day came (as it was coming now) for the crucial test with Spain, every privateer in English ports—sloop, brigantine, or ocean-going galleon—would hoist the royal flag. Ranged alongside Elizabeth's own navy the Spanish were to find their old opponents of the western sea. Better for them if the lesson there afforded them had been gravely laid to heart. It was not Drake's fault at any rate if they forgot it: for even now at the

eleventh hour, and before the last encounter, he was busy, and another sharp reminder was in store.

Preparations for War.—In the spring of 1587 the Armada's preparations were well forward; and Philip was hoping to see his great fleet sail that summer. The harbour of Cadiz was packed with busy shipping; powder and arms and stores of every sort were being loaded up; perhaps a hundred vessels lay at the moorings. All seemed secure; danger was not so much as whispered, and the bolt fell out of a cloudless sky. On 18th April, Drake, with some thirty privateers behind him, sailed in on a flood-tide and sank the ship on guard. The shore batteries fired wide and did not touch him. The Duke of Medina Sidonia, governor of the port, ran off to rouse the garrison; and Drake was left to use the shipping as he pleased. He transferred to his own holds what valuable material they would carry, set fire to the Spanish hulks and left them to run adrift. This done, he took his departure as quietly and deliberately as he had come. Not a boat had he lost, nor a single seaman's life; yet so effectual had been his work that it delayed the Armada's sailing for a good twelve months.

It was the May of 1588 before the Spanish fleet was once more ready for the sea. This interval had been spent by Elizabeth in futile efforts at negotiation; but Philip was past entreaty. He meant to conquer England, come what might; and his plans were carefully laid. In Flanders the Duke of Parma was in waiting. He had with him a force some 20,000 strong and a flotilla of broad-bottomed boats. The Armada was to sail up channel and make straight for the North Foreland. The tiny English fleet was to be ignored. It was hardly expected to attack; and, if it did, it could easily be crushed. In either case the way would then lie open for Parma and invasion. Humanly speaking, success seemed certain; and Philip was no less confident of heavenly assistance. This, we must remember, was to him a holy war, fought, as he verily believed, in the cause of Christ's own Church. The Pope's blessing was upon it. Unceasing prayer had been offered for its triumph during three years past. Its very leaders were uplifted by a sense of their high mission. No oaths, no gambling, no inconvenient conduct was to be allowed among the crews; and every man before he went on board had heard the Mass. But with the best intentions in the world, Philip's discretion was not equal to his faith. For Lord High Admiral he had picked a fool, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the man who ran away from Drake. Medina was no sailor. He had never so much as seen a naval action. He was habitually sick when he went out to sea. Head for business he had none, and he would have been more at home at a royal levee than on the deck of an ocean-going galleon. The result was that the Armada's organisation was ludicrously bad. It put out to sea in the middle of May: but so ill-provided was it with fresh water or edible provisions that it was in port again within a week. Two precious months were wasted in refitting at Corunna.

Yet, truth to tell, this respite was anything but welcome to the Eng-

lish fleet. For her own inexplicable reasons the Queen had refused to credit the enemy's intent. She was with difficulty persuaded to fit out the royal ships at all; and, when she did so, she allowed them food and powder for two months only and no more. As the days wore on and the Armada dallied, Drake and Lord Howard of Effingham, his Admiral-in-Chief, despaired. The delay was worse than maddening, it was perilous; for when at last, towards the close of that long July, their suspense was ended, they had on board but a single week's half rations and powder for two days. On land the precautions were scarcely more elaborate. Beacons were ready, it is true, on every hill-top. Forts were manned; and an army 40,000 strong was hastily mustered under the Earl of Leicester at Thames' mouth. There, when all was over, the Queen paid them a visit and made a most eloquent and famous speech. "I know," she said, "I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman. But I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain or any prince in Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm." Brave words perhaps; but, if Howard and his sailors had been beaten, much good would Leicester and his raw recruits have been against the veterans of Parma.

The Armada in the Channel.—On Saturday, the last day in July, the Armada hove in sight, sailing steadily up channel and little expecting an enemy attack. But to its admiral's dismay the English, instead of standing back to let it pass, closed in. Keel for keel they were equal in mere numbers, and their guns were far more numerous and efficient; but some of them were mere skiffs, and none were large. The Spanish galleons, on the other hand, were less like ships than floating castles. They carried three soldiers on their decks to every sailor; the range of their guns was short; and their tactics were to grapple at the earliest chance and then send boarding-parties in to fight it out. In the long series of engagements, lasting the next two weeks, the Spaniards were outfought and outsailed at every point. The light English ships made rings about them, like nimble destroyers round a slow-paced Dreadnought, answering to a breeze which left them standing, and pouring in a low-aimed deadly broadside while their shots flew high above their mark.¹ The tale of this fortnight's fighting falls into three main phases; and the first of these took the Spaniards up the Channel into the Calais Roads. From Saturday to Saturday Medina held his course, resolved at least to keep his rendezvous with Parma. There ensued a desultory and running fight, with no attempt at any general action. The English hammered at the Spaniard as he went, cut in at a straggler when they got the chance, ran out of powder on the Tuesday, took in a fresh stock (privately furnished from the Channel ports) on Wednesday, returned to the pursuit, and followed on the Saturday evening within a mile or two of Calais Roads. There, under French protection, Medina felt for

¹ The fact is that the English vessels were built as fighting ships and were admirably adapted to their purpose. The Spanish, on the other hand, were little better than converted merchantmen.

the moment comparatively safe. Nor did he think that on the whole he had done his job so badly. Despite the severe hammering he had received, he had lost but three of his more important ships. He was now in touch with Parma, lying at Dunkirk (though Parma's boats in point of fact were not yet ready). So far the English had had some slight advantage, but the first phase ended in a semblance of drawn fight.

The next phase, some forty-eight hours long, had a very different sequel. All that Sunday the Armada lay in Calais. But Howard and Drake did not mean it to remain there. The Thames squadron had just arrived, under Lord Seymour and John Hawkins; and the four commanders laid their heads together on that Sunday afternoon. Their decision was taken; and shortly before midnight the Spanish watch was startled by the sight of vessels approaching through the dark. A moment after more than half a dozen fire-ships were blazing in their midst. Scared out of his senses, Medina ordered the whole fleet out to sea. The order was obeyed with great alacrity; but in the confusion the fleet got broken up. Two-thirds of it drifted far to eastwards along the Flemish coast and could not beat back against the wind. Medina himself was left between Dunkirk and Calais with the other third, left to bear the whole brunt of the next day's attack with no more than forty galleons. The fighting of that Monday was prolonged and fierce beyond all precedent. With the momentary advantage of superior numbers the English struck home as they had never struck before. The Spaniards for their part held out bravely, refusing quarter, fighting till their vessels were dismantled and "the blood was streaming from the scupper-holes." Several ships went down, and for the rest the end seemed near. Through another two hours of such bombardment no Spaniard could have lived. But it was not to be. Once again and at the crisis of their victory the ammunition in the English ships gave out. Drake and Howard drew off.

The second phase was over. With Tuesday the third began, and with it the fate of the Armada passed out of the hands of man into the hands of God. When Howard returned next morning to renew the chase he found the Spaniards shattered and helpless, drifting under the north-west wind straight for the Flemish sandbanks. Surrender or destruction seemed inevitable. But again chance intervened. The wind freshened, shifted suddenly to southwards, and carried its victims off the sandbanks into the open sea. After them went the English; up past Flamborough Head, past Berwick, past the Forth. There Howard turned back. His work was done. But the Armada, still considerable in numbers, went north before the wind. As they rounded Scotland the wind grew to a gale, and they were scattered. Some were wrecked among the Shetlands or on the Scottish coast, where it is said their descendants may still to this very day be traced. Others, less fortunate, ran upon the Irish shore, and the wild natives made short work of any who survived. A remnant—some sixty galleons, less than a half of the number which set out—straggled back, sails torn, hulls riddled and crews starving, to reach the ports of Spain.

The men who had thus saved England were far from considering their work complete. It remained for them to give Spain her *coup de grâce*. Drake sailed across in 1589 to sack Vigo and Corunna; and seven years later Lord Howard destroyed the docks and arsenals of Cadiz. Meanwhile on the Spanish trade-routes a constant harrying warfare was kept up; and Drake himself died in far-off western waters, busy plaguing Philip to the last. Such tactics were abundantly successful. Caught in the grip of the English stranglehold, Spain's energies were insufficient to support the strain, and sea-power passed out of her hands for ever. England was ready enough to step into her place; and for England the defeat of the Armada determined also the issue of the century's religious feud. On the Continent the struggle between Protestant and Catholic still went on. For a few years, indeed, a lull set in, while Europe rested. The Dutch States were left alone. Henry of Navarre succeeded to the throne of France, and, though he found it politic to turn Catholic himself, yet by the Edict of Nantes he extended a full toleration to the Huguenots. But the fires of conflict were not as yet burnt out: they smouldered still; and very soon they were to break out again at a fresh point in the wasting conflagration of the Thirty Years' War. By all this, however, England herself was scarcely touched. Her battle was won, and on her side at least of the Channel the Catholic cause was lost. There might survive a few fanatical Papists to plot the destruction of King James and Parliament. The later Stuarts might one day dream of bolstering up their waning power by a tardy reversion to the Roman Church. These were but empty hopes. The nation's choice was irrevocably clinched on the day the Armada sailed. The fear of Spain had entered deep into men's souls, and all that Spain stood for was henceforth to be regarded with a lasting and deadly hate. The cry of "No Popery" became for centuries the watchword of national security. It recalled to Englishmen the week of that critical August when the national existence was at stake; and even now it still has power to stir unconscious echoes of the forgotten fear.

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF ELIZABETH

The years which followed the Armada's overthrow were years in which it was good to be alive. Along with the age of Pericles in Athens and of Lorenzo Il Magnifico, the patron-prince of Florence, those years must count among the greatest of all time. That England was rich and prosperous goes without saying: she was much more than that. The fair promise of her spring-tide had now ripened suddenly into the full luxuriance of a glorious mid-summer, and in the hour of her peril and her victory England discovered her true self. Her national character found a new and wonderful expression in the supreme genius of her native

poets; and even the nameless, unremembered multitude caught the reflection of a not unworthy pride. Elizabethan Englishmen carried their heads with a high swagger. They talked big and ribald, as men whom no servile fear oppresses. They had looked fate between the eyes; and now, recognising the greatness of their triumph, they were conscious of their own importance in the world. We know these men. Their portraits have been drawn for us by a master-hand. We may find their lineaments, writ broad and done to the very life, in the pages of England's own Shakespeare.

In Elizabeth's latter years the power of the crown attained its zenith. No tyrant-monarch of the Middle Ages ever got so close a grip over his subjects' lives as did this Tudor Queen. The strong hand of the law reached everywhere. It shackled trade and industry. The craftsmen's guilds were practically suppressed. The Government now determined what terms of apprenticeship should be observed, what hours be kept, what price or wages paid. Men were expected one and all to work; and employers were expected to find work for them to do. Yet, strange to tell, the spirit of freedom was not crushed out. It throve. Mark the behaviour of Shakespeare's common folk. The peasants, it is true, cut here and there a sorry figure; and Falstaff may point the finger at his weedy regiment of country loons. But the ostlers and grave-diggers, tapsters, court-fools and serving-men are made of a different stuff. They are jovial, irrepressible creatures. Their tastes are not perhaps the most refined. They dote on bear-baitings and cock-fights. They haunt disreputable taverns, they drink incredible quantities of sack, and their talk is full of obscenities and oaths. But how alive they are, how different from the sodden stupidity of their Saxon forefathers or even from the comfortable serenity of Chaucer's easy-going folk! Their intellects are quick. Like the Cockney of to-day, they are seldom lacking for a saucy repartee; and they speak out their minds with a sane, good-tempered, humorous philosophy which is even now a characteristic of the normal Englishman. They grumble often, but it is over trifles; and they are never sour, like men who have suffered greatly. They have great regard for a title and look up to gentle birth; but they are seldom fulsome or obsequious; for, whatever their class or their condition, they invariably retain their self-respect. The fact is, that trade and industry had mixed the classes. The merchant chatted freely with his junior clerks; the master builder worked side by side with his apprentices. To be rich was no apology for idleness or conceit. To be poor was no disgrace. So, while in other countries the fatal cleavage, begun in feudal times, kept high and low apart, in England the basis of democracy was firmly laid even under the despotism of the Tudor crown.

Sixteenth Century Enclosures.—The country, as we have said, was rich, prosperous, and industrious. Hard work and good living were the rule, and distress was to be found, if anywhere, in the countryside alone. There the progress of liberty was slower than in towns. Feudalism, it is true, had disappeared. There were no villeins now paying their rents

The Age of Elizabeth

by the labour of their hands. But, though such open men were now gone, the landowner was still in his own sphere and too often a very selfish man. Less autocratic in mediæval baron, he could still play the petty tyrant as **Little** by little he had annexed and carefully "enclosed" lands near-by him, and he had gone on to purchase the lesser men; until at length the better part of the surround had passed into his hands. Few of his neighbours were able to run to retain their plots. A sturdy yeoman here and there with a small farm going. Of the rest, some found employment on the estate. Others less fortunate would wander off to join some private expedition on the seas or to tramp the roads as "sturdy beggars," until they were rounded up under the Vagrants' Act.

The growth of poverty and unemployment became at last so obstinate a nuisance that Elizabeth's Government resorted to the passing of a **Poor Law**, whereby the more wealthy members of the parish were forced to contribute to the relief of the distressed. The remedy was effective; and, grumble though they might, the rich were made to pay. Yet this the squire at any rate could well afford to do. He lacked for nothing and he led a royal life, lording it over his hirelings and dependants, and enjoying his pleasure and his sport. The chase was his favourite pastime. He hawked for wild-fowl, hunted the hare with beagles, coursed the stag. Some portion of his estate he usually converted into a deer-preserve; and it is to the planting of the Elizabethan squires that we now chiefly owe the well-treed spacious parks which are the pride of the English landscape. Then too were built many of the stately country mansions which adorn them. Castles (no longer needed for the purpose of rebellion or defence) had lately gone out of fashion; and roomy, comfortable houses took their place. Keeps and porcellises and battlemented towers being now superfluous, a new architectural style came in. Renaissance porticoes with Grecian pillars were borrowed from South Europe. Quaint curving gables were copied from the Dutch; Italian ornaments were used; yet slavish imitation was in the main eschewed; and the English builders soon developed a distinctive manner of their own.¹ There is no mistaking the artistic of these solid Tudor houses, built as a rule of brick, with steep cross-timbered gables, windows mullioned in grey stone, and chimney stacks ingeniously moulded into twisting and undulating curves. The grounds around the house were no less tastefully arranged with shaded walks and warm terraces and a bowling-green for summer play. The plotting of a flower-garden became now for the first time an art; and prim beds were planned upon the new Italian model, while herbs and fruit-trees thrived in the sunny shelter of some walled enclosure. An air of security and ease broods still over these comfortable homes. They tell us of times when the long reign of anarchy and violence was now over and Englishmen were able at last to possess their souls in peace.

¹ See Plate X, opp. page 220.

The Tudors and the Stuarts

lish Renaissance.—Peace and leisure are the natural friends, and the squire's thought would often turn to study, as well as to garden and his hounds. He would build himself a library where his father maybe would have preferred a watch-tower, and he would collect rare books to fill its spacious shelves. For books, if not now, were now at any rate procurable;¹ printing had given a stimulus to writing, and the New Learning had given men new ideas to write with. At first the English authors, like the English architects, had been content to imitate. They had translated the Greek of Plutarch and other classic authors. They had readapted Latin dramas and Italian songs. Even Shakespeare's earliest comedy was a more or less faithful copy of a play by Plautus. The result of this tendency was curious. The forgotten phraseology of Greece and Rome caught the Renaissance poet's fancy, and the pagan gods and goddesses returned, as it were, to earth. The poet wrote of "Phœbus" when he meant the sun. He invoked "Cupid" and the "Muses." Even God Almighty he addressed as "Jove." Fairies went out of fashion; "syrens" and "nymphs" came in; and the highest compliment that the rhyming lover knew was to take a hint from Horace and rechristen his fair charmer as "Celia" or "Phyllis." Yet luckily, as with the builders, such slavish imitation did not go too far. As he sang, the poet soon forgot his classic models in the pure pleasure of his art, and threw into his singing the full rich melody of his native tongue.

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
My lady sweet, arise;
Arise, arise!

No lovelier songs were ever sung than these Elizabethan lyrics. The sound of music was in all men's ears and English music was accounted the first in Europe. Every young gallant was writing love-poems. Great courtiers like Raleigh were writing them, and soldiers, like Sidney, too. Many were the work of nameless minstrels, ballads made to be sung at country fairs or by the winter fire. They are the outpourings of a race to whom poetry was a natural instinct rather than a studied art.

These songs were but the first-fruits: the full harvest was yet to be reaped. The highest flights of literature are not attainable without much discipline and study; and it was not till Elizabeth had been some twenty years or more upon the throne that English genius soared. Then there arose such a generation of dramatists and poets as the world has seldom seen. In 1590 Edmund Spenser, the poets' poet as he has been called,

¹ The book most read in Elizabethan times was undoubtedly the translated version of the Bible. It had a profound influence on the thought and style of this and succeeding generations.

produced his great romance the "*Faerie Queene*," a poem in which the tale of chivalry and true love is quaintly but beautifully blended with an allegorical depiction of the war between Virtue and Vice. Spenser chose deliberately to cast his language in an antique mould, using forgotten words of Chaucer's day and forms of grammar which had long gone out. But his genius breathes with the freshness of the morning, and few, if any, poets have matched the equable music of his verse.

A gentle knight was pricking on the plaine,
Y-cladd in mightie arms and silver shielde,
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
The cruel marks of many a bloody felde;
Yet arms till that time did he never wield;
His angry steed did chide his foming bitt,
As much disdayning to the curb to yield,
Full jolly knight he seemed, and faire did sit
As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

Meanwhile in another sphere still greater things were doing; and the full height of the Elizabethan genius was to be revealed upon the stage. Drama of a sort had long been a national taste. Religious plays were popular, as we have seen, during the Middle Ages. Quaint masques were acted upon village greens by country mummers. Sometimes inn-yards were used for more ambitious spectacles. Finally, in 1576, the first real theatre was built at Blackfriars in London;¹ and it was not long before the playwrights were forthcoming. Within a dozen years Christopher Marlowe, son of a Kentish shoemaker, was producing the first great tragedies of the English stage. In his two plays entitled "*Dr. Faustus*" and "*Tamburlaine the Great*," Marlowe set the standard of a magnificent blank verse; and in some lines, such as the grand refrain in *Tamburlaine's* resounding speech,

To ride in triumph through Persepolis,

he falls scarcely behind the genius of his exact contemporary and rival, the young William Shakespeare.

Shakespeare.—From poacher to ostler, and from ostler to actor, Shakespeare had slowly worked his way into the dramatic world. Finally he was engaged to rewrite other people's plays for theatrical production, and with that his true career began. Compared with later work, his earliest efforts with the pen are unoriginal and crude. The play-going public, accustomed to the low buffoonery of clowns and mummers, demanded plenty of coarse fun; and Shakespeare gave the public what it asked. He did not disdain the most execrable puns; he made his fools talk the most fantastic nonsense; and he would often introduce a duel or a wrestling match simply to satisfy the mob. Even in his greatest tragedies he did not forget the public's taste for murder scenes and bloodshed; and in the closing act of "*Hamlet*," the corpses are literally heaped upon the stage. Yet all the while his genius was ex-

¹ See Plate XI, opp. page 230.

panding, and with amazing swiftness. In 1590 he had produced his first attempt, "Love's Labour Lost." Five years later he was writing "Romeo and Juliet" and the "Midsummer Night's Dream." In 1598 he had begun on the great series of historical plays, "Henry IV," "Henry V," and the rest; and in the fine patriotic speeches there put into the mouths of the mediæval kings we seem to catch an echo of the new national pride which the recent triumphs over Spain had stirred in English hearts. Shakespeare was in this a faithful mirror of his country's greatness. But he was much more than that. Before Elizabeth's reign was over he had written "Hamlet," and thus shown himself the supreme interpreter of human character in whatever time or place. No one ever possessed such insight as did Shakespeare. His men and women seem more true to life than life itself. To follow the tale of Hamlet's troubles and perplexities is to see the soul of man laid bare; and many a reader has laid the book down with the feeling, "Hamlet is I myself." To the world such literature is a permanent possession; it belongs to no one age or country, but to all. Yet upon the age and country which produced him Shakespeare has bestowed a unique and imperishable fame.

It would be idle to pretend that Shakespeare was fully appreciated by the men of his own day. The public liked his plays; but so little account was taken of their writer that we have scarcely any record of the details of his life. Happily, however, there were several leading noblemen who valued literature and lent their influence in the aid of rising genius. The Earl of Southampton is known to have befriended Shakespeare; and it is believed that Essex was interested in him too. Since the Renaissance culture had become the fashion. Ministers like Bacon were famous for their essays, and lords, as we have seen, wrote songs. At the Court itself the merits of rival poets were eagerly discussed, patronage was extended with an eye to political advantages; and presiding majestically over the realm of art was the stiff, unamiable figure of the aged Queen. Elizabeth was no artist (except perhaps in the game of lies and counterfeit), but she used to pride herself on her insight as a critic. We are told how Falstaff's humour so delighted her that she asked Shakespeare to write another play depicting the old vagabond in love; Shakespeare obeyed, and the "Merry Wives of Windsor" was the result. The Queen, however, was by no means satisfied with mere obedience. She demanded flattery, and she got it. Poets vied with one another in the extravagant compliments they paid her; they christened her "Oriana" or "the Virgin Queen." Shakespeare himself wrote in her honour the celebrated lines of the "Midsummer Night's Dream":

That very time I saw (though thou couldst not),
 Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
 Cupid all arm'd; a certain aim he took
 At a fair Vestal thronéd by the West,
 And his love-shaft smartly from his bow

As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts,
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon;
And the Imperial Votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy free.

Spenser, too, added his homage to the Queen, and alluded to the hideous red wig she wore as "yellow locks crispéd with golden wire." Knowing her as we do, it is hard for us to understand the veneration which Elizabeth called forth. Her vanity was ludicrous. She stocked three hundred different dresses in her wardrobe. She pretended to think men admired her for her beauty. She kept up her dancing long after middle age. Hers was the gayest of gay courts. The balls and banquets, pageants and carnivals outrun imagination. The clothes alone must have cost a mint of money; and they were fantastic to the point of sheer physical discomfort. Men strutted in garments stiff with gold brocade and tight trunk hose about their legs. Ladies wore cramping, strait-laced bodies and wide skirts puffed out on hoops like crinolines. Both sexes adopted the fashion (learnt from Spain) of wearing starched lace-ruffs which galled the neck. Breasts, hands, and forearms sparkled with jewelled ornaments and chains of gold. The scenes about the throne were brilliant and spectacular beyond compare; but amid all such pomps and shows and the whirl of gaiety the Queen's own heart was sad. All feared, but no one loved her. Marriage, which might have brought her happiness, she had refused; and as old age drew on a dark melancholy seized her, and she ended her days a lonely woman, embittered, suspicious, and morose.

Ireland and England.—Before death came to her, even fortune, hitherto so friendly, veered; and in the last year of the century there befell an untoward incident which served at once to deepen the Queen's gloom and for one part of her dominions to mark the beginning of immeasurable distress. This was the blunder of Essex's Irish mission. Ireland had so far played but little part in English politics. Since Henry II had sent Strongbow over on his impossible task of conquest, that savage and independent island had remained savage and in a large measure independent still. Baron after baron, it is true, had received a grant of land in Ireland and had gone over to rule on his estate; but with the lapse of years he and his descendants had become true Irishmen and had forgotten their past allegiance to the English crown. The only district over which the King's deputy held any real authority was a narrow strip of land round Dublin called the "Pale." The rest, a country ill-reclaimed from forest, moor, and bog, was ruled by a succession of quarrelsome chiefs. One, Thomas of Kildare, the Leinster earl, had defied the English deputy of Henry VIII, and Henry, roused, had used the insurrection as a means of extending his own power over the land. The Irish Parliament had been compelled to recognise the headship of the English King. The Irish chiefs were given titles under the English crown. Even the Irish Church was brought under the English Protestant

reforms. But, though Henry himself had left Ireland outwardly contented and at peace, trouble was brewing. The O'Neils of Ulster hatched plots against Elizabeth and intrigued with Mary Stuart. Worse still, the Church of Rome had seen its chance. When in 1570 Elizabeth was excommunicated, Jesuit priests were sent across to work upon the Irish peasant's ignorance. The old religion made a strong appeal to these superstitious folk, and by degrees the Pope's authority recovered hold. Even Philip of Spain, eager to play his part, fomented insurrections which he could not effectively assist. Thus harassed, Elizabeth had determined upon a stern and novel measure. If the Irish Catholics proved such unprofitable subjects, somebody else should be found to take their place. Part of Ireland had already been practically depopulated by famine and the sword; and the Queen proposed to fill them by "planting" Protestant settlers on the land. In 1586 she had begun with Munster in the south. Half a million acres were made over to her nominees. Sir Walter Raleigh¹ and the poet Spenser were among those who received estates, and, as all know, the presence of Protestant landowners in southern Ireland remains a vexed problem even to this day. But, besides sowing the seed of many future troubles, this Plantation policy brought no immediate peace. In 1598 the O'Neils of Ulster were up in arms again, and their example fired the smouldering anger of the south. The English "planters" were driven from their farms. The cry of liberty was raised throughout the land, and affairs were soon so critical that Elizabeth was forced to contemplate a large campaign.

Among her special favourites was a man of wild ambition who coveted the task. This man was Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. As step-son of Leicester and son-in-law to Walsingham, Essex had strong claims upon the Queen; and lawless, ill-conditioned rascal as he was, Elizabeth believed in him. In 1599 she sent him over with the title of Governor-General and an army nearly 20,000 strong. Essex was no great soldier. He led his army into the desolated districts of the south and lost two-thirds of it among the Munster bogs. Having failed in warfare he tried diplomacy, and failed still worse. In a conference with the rebel chief he agreed to grant the Irish a full measure of Home Rule. Then, taking horse, he returned post-haste to England to report his doings to the Queen. All muddy from his ride and unannounced he burst into her private chamber and blurted out the truth. Deeply incensed, no less by his folly than by this last discourtesy, Elizabeth ordered his arrest; and when set at large again she found her former favourite converted to a bitter foe. He plotted rebellion with some Catholic lords, failed miserably, and was beheaded. The Queen, more soured than ever by this episode, visited her ill-temper on the Irish folk. Lord Mountjoy had taken over the task which Essex bungled. By stern measures and ruthless warfare he broke the back of the rebellion and hunted down the rebel chiefs. It was a cruel business; in many districts nothing but "ashes and dead carcasses" remained; and women were driven by the

¹ See Plate IX, opp. page 206.

pressure of starvation to feed on human flesh. But it was only a prelude of further cruelties yet to come; and Mountjoy's government left an evil legacy behind. His was a more complete conquest than any which had gone before; but it roused in Ireland a fierce spirit of national resentment which even the passage of three centuries has not as yet allayed.



FIG. 24.

Before this work was done, however, the long reign had closed. Elizabeth was seized with an affection of the throat, and took to her bed. Her councillors gathered to ascertain her wishes about the succession to the throne; it is said that she was too ill to speak and yet would make no sign. The truth is that, whether she liked it or not, there was no alternative. The direct line of the House of Tudor was extinct. Only

the side branch issuing from the old Scottish marriage of Henry VII's daughter now remained; and, humiliating as was such a prospect to the Queen, her crown was bound to pass to the son of her old enemy and rival, Mary Stuart. James, who was still a child when Mary crossed the border into England, had grown to manhood as the Scottish King. Unlike his mother, but like the vast majority of his countrymen, James was a Protestant, and that was, for Englishmen, a vital point. No other choice than James would have been acceptable; and so much at least of good resulted from Elizabeth's refusal of the married state, that it led thus indirectly to the Union of the English and Scottish throne. On the Queen's death James VI of Scotland came down to be crowned in London as King James I.

CHAPTER VII

JAMES I

What hopes, one wonders, what fears, or what anxieties were moving in the mind of that young Scot (he was but thirty-seven at the time) when, travelling southward to be crowned in London, he first mixed among the folk he was to rule. Did he doubt of their loyalty or question his own powers? Did he anticipate the breach that was soon to spring up between them, widening with the passage of the years and bringing at last to the young boy who drove south beside him a sharp and tragic end? Had James, in short, any inkling of the fate in store for him and Charles? Not he. He lived in a Fool's Paradise, confident of his fitness for the task before him and never dreaming he could fail. His predecessors on the English throne had governed so strongly and so successfully that they made the task of government appear simplicity itself. Yet in reality it was anything but simple. Englishmen have never been easy folk to handle. They are uncommonly touchy about what they term their "rights." They attach a vast importance to their institutions. Humour this instinct, respect their privileges, play the game with them, keep to the rules, and they will respond to leadership as no other nation can; and such was, in fact, the secret of the Tudors' mastery. But take the reverse line: flout their traditions, violate precedents, furnish the least suspicion of injustice or bad faith, and they will become at once as stubborn and intractable as mules. Now such jealous guardianship of treasured "rights" was very specially to be remarked in the generation of which we here come to speak. In seventeenth-century England there were simply country farmers ready, as we shall see, to go to prison rather than submit to paying an illegal tax, law-abiding citizens who preferred to leave the country rather than see the provisions of the Magna Carta set at nought, pious, peace-loving tradesmen who in the last extremity would even take up arms against their sovereign to defend what they considered the sanctity of law. This

passion for liberty and justice was altogether lost upon the Stuarts. It was not that they committed acts more harsh or more tyrannical than Henry or Elizabeth. In many ways, indeed, their rule was mild compared with those. It was simply that they never could appreciate what their English subjects would or would not stand. There were several good reasons for their blindness. It must never be forgotten, in the first place, that they come of what was in those days an almost alien race.

Born a Scot and bred a Scot, James was wholly ignorant of English ways and customs. During his first journey down to London a thief was caught picking the pockets of the crowd. James condemned the fellow without trial and hanged him out of hand. Such a thing had not been known in England for a century or more; and yet James was altogether unaware that he had erred. How was it likely that a man so ignorant and so obtuse should learn to gauge correctly the political susceptibilities of Englishmen. Then, again, James was swelled up with an intolerable conceit. Clever he doubtless was, well educated in books at any rate, able to quote Latin or to talk theology. But such learning only served to increase his natural vanity; it allowed his fulsome courtiers to dub him "the British Solomon" without too gross a departure from the truth: it did not tell him, what it might have done, that in the affairs of life and human character he was little better than a fool. Lastly, his reading had bred in him a theory; and, dangerous as a pedant's theories often are, a King's are infinitely more dangerous still. According to the theory of King James (and it had indeed the support of many great legal minds) the monarch was by divine authority invested with a vast and undefined power whereby in case of emergency he might act for the good of the country as he himself conceived of it, and might override, if need be, all limitations of law and precedent. It was for him of course to decide what constituted an emergency; and it was then within his power to dispense laws in direct opposition to the will of Parliament. To call in question this "royal prerogative" of absolute authority appeared to James a treasonable insult to his crown; to challenge the "Divine Right" of hereditary kingship was nothing less than impious blasphemy. This theory—plainly ridiculous in any but a Catholic monarch—won the easy approbation of High Church divines, who chose for their own ends to flatter James; but from all in England that was most stable and most free it met with opposition and contempt; and more than all else it was to prove hereafter the final undoing of his son.

James and the Puritans.—The first problem of the reign, and one on which it tickled James's vanity not a little to pronounce, was the religious question. The old quarrel was not over yet; the various parties were still at loggerheads; and even the Catholics, as we presently shall see, had not abandoned hope. But by far the most important, the most numerous, and, as time showed, the most determined of the malcontents were the extreme sect of Protestants now coming to be lumped under the common name of Puritans. There were many different types of

this new persuasion, some more advanced, some less; but the one point on which they all agreed was the belief that the English Reformation had not gone far enough. Rid though they were of the tyranny of popes, they felt that they still lay under the tyranny of priests, and more especially of bishops.

The religious settlement which Elizabeth effected had left behind, in short, too much which smacked to them of superstitious use. When the clergyman appeared in a white surplice they scented the old Catholic doctrine that the priesthood carried with it some supernatural and mysterious power. When obeisance was made at the name of Jesus Christ, they fancied that the old idolatry was creeping back. Some went so far as to declare all ritual quite superfluous. There was even danger, they imagined, in exalting one building above others as the fitting place for prayer. Worship was worship on a hillside or a green fully as much as in a consecrated church, and true faith lay not in ceremonial forms but in the spirit of genuine devotion. To them the one thing needful for salvation was to lead a godly life, and the more fanatical among the Puritans endeavoured very earnestly and literally to practise what they preached. Like the Quakers of more modern times, they dressed in sober clothes of grey or drab, cropped their hair short in protest against the foppish fashion of long curls, forsook the use of oaths, and answered, in strict obedience to the words of Scripture, with plain "Yea" and "Nay." They looked askance at dancing, theatricals, cock-fights, and all such innocent frivolity, and made, in short, a very solemn, melancholy business out of life. The stronghold of this vigorous and progressive movement lay, as usual, in the larger towns, where men were able to meet frequently together and to discuss in secret their grievances and fears; but it had a large following in the country too, and many a village parson was a Puritan at heart, using the Prayer-Book as in duty bound, but heartily disliking much that he found therein. Now among many of the Puritan persuasion there was a strong fellow-feeling with the Presbyterian Scots, whom they saw to have carried ecclesiastical reform much further than the English Church had done, making away with bishops and establishing in their place a Synod or Assembly of elected laymen. Seeing all this, the English Puritans were counting, not unreasonably, on a sympathetic hearing from the new King, himself a Scot and, as they fancied, an upholder of the Presbyterian Church. Before James, therefore, had been many days in England he received a deputation asking for reform. He was presented with the so-called Millenary Petition, purporting to contain (as its name declares) one thousand signatures of parish priests, though in point of fact not more than eight hundred had given it support. The demands were not excessive: some change of ritual, some curtailment of church music, and some latitude of conscience for the priest.

Hampton Court Conference.—James summoned a conference at Hampton Court for the discussion of these points, and for two days he listened attentively to what was said. Then by some luckless chance

mention was made of establishing a Synod to assist the bishops with advice. James pricked up his ears. Talk such as this touched on a tender spot, for it bore not too indirectly on the question of his own divine appointment to the throne. Men who denied to bishops the sole right of ruling in God's name would soon be denying it to kings; and the introduction of an elected Synod could only be a step to much more democratic claims. The modern Solomon gave the Puritan his mind: a Presbyterian Church "agreed with Monarchy," he said, "as well as God did with the Devil." Set up a Synod, and "Jack and Tom, Will and Dick would soon be meeting to pass censure on his council and himself." Then, rising in his chair, the King swore roundly that unless the Puritans conformed to the whole doctrine of the Church, "he would harry them out of the land, or else worse." The Puritans had got their answer and James had shown his hand. There was to be no weakening, while he ruled, in King's or bishop's claims—strict discipline, one creed for all, and no toleration for dissent. So ended the conference of Hampton Court. It had one good result, in that the King gave orders for a fresh revision of the English Bible; and the outcome of this order—based for the most part on the translation made nearly a century before by Erasmus's pupil Tyndale—was the Authorised Version which we use to-day. For the Puritans, however, there was cold comfort in this boon; and, though the days of active persecution were gone by, they suffered a good deal silently. Some who were parish priests were turned out of their posts; some carried on their worship on the sly, risking the fine for non-attendance at the church. A few left England altogether, crossing to Holland and from there to North America, where at a later date an increasing number of fellow-exiles joined them. The rest, less resolute but not less ill at ease, bided their time and the revenge which, though still undreamt of, time would bring.

Catholic Plots.—If the Puritans had had their say, it yet remained for the Catholics to have theirs. But they went very differently to work. Though afraid to show their true colours openly and insecure of backing from abroad, a few fanatics thought they saw their chance and began to lay secret plans for the overthrow of James. In the first year of the new reign a conspiracy was unmasked and effectually forestalled. It went by the name of the "Bye Plot"; for behind it there was traced, or at any rate suspected, a much more formidable "Main Plot." Nothing was proved; but amongst the persons on whom suspicion fell was Elizabeth's old friend, Sir Walter Raleigh. The treatment meted out to him was extraordinarily brutal. Condemned to death, and even led out as though for execution, he received a late reprieve and was committed to the Tower. There he spent thirteen years, devoting his solitary days to chemical experiments and the compilation of a History of the World. In 1616, James being short of money, Sir Walter offered to sail to America for gold. Leave was granted, and the voyage took place; but after a fruitless search up the Orinoco river, where he thought to have struck on Eldorado, the fabulous "Country of Gold," Raleigh was con-

strained to come back home with empty hands and confess his quest a failure. James took a mean revenge. To satisfy the Spaniards, whose vessels Raleigh had attacked, he put the great scholar mariner to death. Meanwhile, however, and not long after Raleigh's first conviction, another more serious plot had taken place. The laws against Catholics were still harsh; heavy fines were laid on all who refused attendance at the church; and, though many conservative squires continued to keep Jesuit priests in hiding, they did so at great risk.

James had for the moment relaxed these penal laws, but public opinion had compelled their reinforcement. Exasperated by this turn of events, Robert Catesby and other Catholic gentlemen resolved in 1605 to strike a blow. They began by hiring a cellar which adjoined the Parliament House, and they enlisted Guy Fawkes, a veteran soldier and expert engineer, to help them drive a tunned underground. Luck favoured their design; for during these operations an opportunity arose of hiring another cellar directly underneath the Hall of Parliament itself. The new cellar was taken; thirty-six barrels of gunpowder were stored in it and faggots piled on top. On 5th November the King and Parliament were to meet. On the 4th a certain Lord Monteagle received a letter which contained the following mysterious words: ". . . I would advise you as you tender your life, to desire some excuse to shift your attendance at this Parliament . . . for though there be no appearance of any stir, yet I say they shall receive a terrible blow this Parliament and shall not see who hurts them." The fact is that one of the conspirators, Tresham by name, was brother-in-law to Monteagle, and he plainly had blabbed. The letter was taken to the King, and James for once in a way displayed some common sense. Though a mere infant at the time when his father Darnley had been blown up at Holyrood by Bothwell, he knew the tale; and now when he saw the letter he recognized at once at what it hinted. An order was issued to search among the vaults. Guy Fawkes was discovered and arrested; but, rack him as they might, he would not disclose the names of his accomplices. Catesby and company had meanwhile got to horse. They adhered to their first plans, and rode to raise rebellion in the Midlands. But the hunt was up. The sheriff's men were after them, and in a few days' time they were surrounded in a house and shot down from without. Such was the wretched end of a mean and futile plot. It aroused, perhaps, more anger against Catholics than any other incident before or after; and, though their full rigour was not kept, the laws against them were at once made much more severe. James himself might have been a hero had he cared; for nothing does more to warm a people's heart towards their king than to see his life in danger. But he threw away his chance; and, if he had deliberately set out to court unpopularity, he could not have succeeded better than he did. The two main policies to which he hung through the next twenty years were both bitterly distasteful to the people whom he ruled. Parliament, their chief pride, he bullied,

flouted, and eventually discarded altogether. Spain, their old enemy and still their most lively fear, he made as far as possible his friend.¹

James's Financial Straits.—Like most conceited men, James scorned advice, more especially when it was good. Raleigh, whose genius might have been of invaluable service, he cast, as we have seen, upon one side. Francis Bacon, perhaps the ablest man about the Court, was never given a chance. His wisdom and experience carried no weight; his most brilliant schemes were thwarted; and though he was permitted to rise to the position of Lord Chancellor, it was only by toadying to James; and when at last he was impeached for taking bribes, James showed not the least compunction in throwing him to the wolves. In 1621 the great essayist, lawyer, and philosopher was publicly disgraced, and passed his remaining years under a cloud. Such was the value James set on good advice; and it was the same with Parliament. The Tudors had always made a show at least of consulting the two Houses. James never did; and it was a fatal blunder. Since the days, three hundred years before, when Parliament's life had first begun, its function had always been twofold. Originally summoned to vote taxes for the King, it had very soon asserted its right to claim something in return—the redress of an old grievance, it might be, or the passage of some new law. So a tacit bargain had, as it were, been struck whereby the King himself got the wherewithal to govern, Parliament a say in the methods of government—and both parties were thus satisfied. This, however, did not suit James at all. It was like him to expect to get something for nothing and, while ignoring his side of the bargain and turning a deaf ear to Parliament's requests, to look for the prompt payment of all the money that he asked. Worse still, he was always asking, and the sums he asked for were by no means small.

Let us, however, be quite fair to James (which is more, perhaps, than Parliament ever was). For a King of England he was miserably poor; and to meet all the expenses of the various public services he never had enough. Nor was this simply due to his own personal extravagance. During the sixteenth century a curious economic change had been slowly taking place; and the purchasing power of money had sunk beyond all belief. Throughout this time, let us remember, precious metal had been shipped across in increasing quantities from the New World. It is a law that when a thing is plentiful its value is almost invariably diminished; and thus silver became cheap. The result was that a silver penny or a silver shilling would no longer buy so much

¹ It must, however, be said in James's favour that Spain was no longer England's most dangerous enemy or rival. Since the Armada she had gone steadily downhill; while France, with equal steadiness, had been rising. If James really saw that friendship with Spain as against France was now the wiser policy, he saw further than most of his contemporaries, and showed a greater wisdom than is usually allowed to him. What, however, is more difficult to forgive is James's neglect of the fleet. His positive contempt for naval interests did much to alienate the sea-board towns from his son.

as formerly. By the end of the century, for instance, as much as 38s. 6d. was paid for a quarter of wheat which had cost about 6s. at the beginning. Take it all round, the effective value of money was reduced to roughly one-third of what it had been, which meant that in 1600 a shilling would only buy the equivalent of a fourpenny piece in the old days. Such a change was disastrous for the crown; for, even if the royal revenues had been somewhat increased, they had increased nothing like threefold; and the cash could not be stretched to match the rise in prices. This will explain in part why Elizabeth was so notorious for her thrift; but things were even worse for James than they were for her; and he was simply unable to make both ends meet. Even in time of peace the King's exchequer had to provide for many things for the upkeep of the Navy, for the equipment of such standing army as there was, for the whole machinery of law and government, not to mention the less necessary expenses of a luxurious Court.

Where did the King find money to meet these outgoings? The sources of his revenue were strictly limited. First, there were certain regular sources over which Parliament had little or no control: a considerable income from the rents of the Royal estates; various old feudal dues still paid by noble landowners to the crown; fines and confiscations imposed by the Courts of Law: to these we may add the sale of Monopolies, the sole right that is conferred on particular companies or individuals to trade in such things as salt or linen or soap. Secondly, there were the taxes which it lay with Parliament to vote the crown, or, if it chose, withhold. These were of two sorts: special subsidies levied for a particular emergency like war; and a regular taxation levied year in, year out, upon the Import Trade. These latter taxes or custom-dues were known as Tunnage and Poundage, because a certain percentage was exacted for every tun of wine and every pound's-worth of merchandise entering English ports. As trade thrived, the value of these custom dues very naturally increased; and they became a bone of bitter contention between Parliament and the Stuarts. At his accession James, like every previous sovereign, had been granted the custom-dues for life; but it was not long before Parliament sorely repented of its premature generosity. Desperate for want of money, James began to overstep the limits of his power. Not only did he raise the scale of the import dues without ever asking Parliament's leave, but he imposed them upon articles hitherto exempt from such taxation. A certain merchant named John Bates was made to pay, for instance, on a cargo of currants. He protested and took the point into the Courts of Law. It was made a test case; the judges were, as usual, subservient to the King, and Bates lost. Parliament was furious; and, not content with challenging the King's unprecedented action, they countered vigorously in whatever way they could. They disputed James's pretensions to divine authority; they took up the case of the Puritan clergymen who had been turned out of their posts; they even ventured to attack James's special protégés, the Bishops. For some while the unseemingly wrangle went on, until

in 1611 James lost his patience. He dissolved Parliament, and, paying his way as best he could, *he ruled for ten whole years without their aid*.¹ A more foolish step can hardly be imagined. The insult, however passively endured, was not lost on Englishmen. It was galling enough to see their most treasured institution thus wantonly insulted by a half-alien king; it was intolerable to see it totally suspended; and during those silent years a feeling of bitterness, rendered the more dangerous by repression, was slowly taking hold. Yet before Parliament was once again to meet, James had added another gratuitous insult to the national pride. He had openly sided with Spain.

The Thirty Years' War.—The religious feud, which, like some fever of the blood, had so long racked and crippled Europe, was not to have expended its full violence without one last and even more hideous outbreak of hostilities; nor was England herself, though by no means vitally affected, to pass altogether untouched. The mean theatre of conflict was not this time to lie in France or Holland, but beyond the Rhine in Germany. That loose confederacy of feudal States, which was still, in name at least, the Holy Roman Empire, had been still further disunited by the progress of the Lutheran Reformation. According to the final compromise of Charles V, each State was left free to adopt the religion of its choice. Thus, while the Southern States, loyal to their Emperor's creed, still clung to Rome, the Northerners, Protestant in the main, had linked themselves in a defensive league, headed by Frederic, the Protestant Elector of the Palatinate. Sooner or later a clash was sure to come between the two rival interests; and, when it came, it began far away in the east upon the upper waters of the Elbe. There lay the kingdom of Bohemia, held, in accordance with a long tradition, by the Holy Roman Emperor himself. In 1619 the ruling Emperor died; and the Bohemian nobles, being Protestants themselves and desiring a Protestant in preference to a Catholic king, refused to accept the rule of the new Emperor and offered the Bohemian crown to the Elector Frederic. Frederic accepted and the fat was on the fire. The Emperor rallied his forces, and the Thirty Years' War began—and began disastrously for the Protestants. First the Bohemians were defeated outside their capital of Prague. Then the King of Spain, eager to join in upon the Catholic side, marched an army out of Flanders up the Rhine and overran the Elector Frederic's personal dominion, the Palatinate. Things looked very black, so black that even England was aroused. The nation's sympathies were doubly pledged to Frederic, for, besides being a Protestant, he had married James's own daughter. His appeal, therefore, could scarcely fall upon deaf ears. The Commons, now once more assembled, voted enthusiastically in his support, "waving their hats as high as they could hold them"; gentlemen in London swore upon drawn swords to live or die for the good cause; and when the news came of

¹ As a matter of fact James did summon a Parliament in 1614; but this was no sooner summoned than it was dismissed again, and it came to be called, for obvious reasons, the "Addled Parliament."

his brother-in-law's defeat, even the young Prince Charles retired into his chamber and remained there for two days disconsolate.

Projected Alliance with Spain.—Such, however, was not by any means his father's attitude. James never hated the Catholics as his subjects did. He had always shown an alarming readiness to treat with Spain; and latterly he had fallen, as it so happened, under the influence of two most unfortunate advisers. One was the Spanish ambassador Gondomar, a very able and a very dangerous schemer. This man had won James's private ear and was busy pouring into it flattering suggestions for an alliance between Spain and England. The other was the brilliant, slap-dash young Englishman George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham to be. Having wormed his way into the affections of Prince Charles, Buckingham carried all before him at the Court. The King himself he treated almost with contempt and dictated at his will all the high policies of State. James never showed in a worse light. A mere puppet in the hands of these two men, he attended less than ever now to the interests and wishes of the nation; and when the dangerous crisis of the Thirty Years' War drew on, he was drifting rapidly towards an almost fatal breach. Astounding as it may seem, he was actually proposing to marry Prince Charles to the Infanta, the young princess of Spain. Gondomar had urged it, and Buckingham was delighted at the prospect of so brilliant a match for his young master; and James himself now clutched at the desperate hope of curbing, by this means, the Spanish King's designs upon the German Protestants in general and his unfortunate son-in-law Frederic in particular. Such was the scheme James cherished in his heart when, in 1621, after a ten years' interval, he was forced by sheer lack of funds to face his Parliament once more. That it would meet with opposition he could hardly fail to see, for he knew the English prejudice.

Europe was ablaze. The Protestants were hard pressed; feeling for them in England was running high, and the nation, in short, was clamouring for war against its old enemy, the very nation he had chosen for his friend. But James's mind was made up: he had resolved, if possible, to dupe his Parliament. He succeeded, as usual, only in enraging them. At first, if merely to obtain a grant of money, he made some show of intending to make war: when pressed for immediate action, he lectured the Commons very gravely upon the duty of keeping to their place and leaving the policies of State to him. Finally, when they entered upon their records a solemn protest against so gross a degradation of their rights, he at once dissolved the House and with his own hand tore the offending page out of the book. Then, rid at last of their obnoxious presence, he returned to his cherished notion of the Spanish match.

This amazing project found its sequel in a still more amazing episode. In 1623 two young men, giving their names as John and Thomas Smith, embarked for France. Thence they made their way on horseback into Spain, and so to the royal palace at Madrid. They were none other than

the Prince and Buckingham, come to do the match-making themselves. It was a fool's adventure, and from the moment of their arrival everything went wrong. The Duke's free and easy manners, his boasts of England, his expressions of contempt for all things Spanish, soon roused the resentment of his hosts. The Prince, who had imagined himself to be in love, began to have his doubts. One day he jumped into a garden where the young princess was walking, and she ran off shrieking in a fright. This was unpromising, and, worse than this, the conditions which her father imposed upon the marriage were inordinately stiff, amounting, in fact, to nothing less than open toleration for all Romanists in England. The long and short of it was that the two wooers came back without the bride, and felt themselves well out of an awkward situation. Their return was heralded at home by wild outbursts of rejoicing. Crowds cheered; bells rang and bonfires blazed; and, so far from being discredited by this failure, Buckingham took more upon himself than ever. Fickle as a weather-vane, and snatching at each new chance of winning popularity, he arranged to marry his young master, not to a Protestant, indeed, but (what was the next best thing) to a French princess. He humoured the nation's anti-Catholic zeal by declaring war upon the side of Elector Frederic and the German Protestants, and though the army which he sent to Holland, ill-equipped, ill-provisioned, and ill-led, melted away from desertion or disease before a blow was struck, his impudent ascendancy was still maintained. The wretched King, who did not share in the initial credit of this expedition, was spared the full ignominy of its inglorious end. In the spring of 1625 James died. No one sorrowed at his passing, and no one specially rejoiced; for long ere this it had become plain to all that King Buckingham reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER VIII

CHARLES I QUARRELS WITH PARLIAMENT

Charles and Buckingham.—Conceit is of two kinds. There is the vanity—a not uncommon accompaniment of raw youth—blatant in its self-assertion, extravagant with money, flashy in dress, which fails to recognise its shortcomings because it never stops to think, yet which not infrequently carries the world by storm, because the world most obligingly accepts it at its own self-valuation. Such was the character of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, a wayward, irresponsible, and superficial schemer, but, except for the chance which made him a king's favourite, a comparatively harmless man. There is another type of vanity more subtle and deep-rooted, which arises not from a mere exuberance of spirits, but from a calculated belief in its own superior powers. Such a nature is egoistic; it is utterly wrapt up in what concerns itself; which self it conceives as being the very focus and centre

of the universe, and others as mere insignificant specks privileged to revolve round that all-important point. Criticism is lost on such a mind; resistance but renders it more stubborn; failure leaves it more bitter. Nothing, in short, can shake it from the unalterable conviction that its own chosen course is right. Of this type was Charles Stuart. Aloof, unimpressionable, self-possessed and cold, he was yet no cynic like the Tudors. He had a sense, and a high sense too, of his responsibilities and duties. He tried to be loyal to his few friends. He was willing to make a sacrifice of life itself rather than abandon the ideal on which his life was based. Yet never for one instant did it dawn upon him that this ideal might be wrong. Even at the last extremity, he would not admit to himself that he had erred. He suffered no remorse. He felt a clear conscience towards his God. For, though he was deeply religious, Charles's religion was the religion of the Pharisee who thanked his Maker for having made him what he was; and his creed, if honestly expressed, would have run thus: "I believe in kings as Heaven's chief instrument for the world's good, who, being by God himself appointed to their post, can make no surrender of it and can do no wrong; more especially do I believe in Charles Stuart, called by Divine Grace to sit upon the English throne and to govern the stiff-necked people of this unworthy island." However opposed to English liberties was such a creed as this, it none the less rallied to him many who by temperament or by interest still preferred an absolute monarchy to freedom. Charles was well served by these; his natural grace of manner, his kingly bearing, even the bold authority with which he claimed their service, fascinated and even won the affection of such minds. That affection was not returned. There was only one man for whom Charles really cared, and on whom he lavished all that he had to give—the Duke of Buckingham. Him Charles loved with the full vehemence of his narrow soul, and he never forgave the English people for their treatment of his friend.

Whatever his faults, Buckingham was no do-nothing, and with the war of religion still raging on the Continent he was not one to miss the chance of cutting a fine figure in history. Was Spain giving trouble to the Dutch? Was the Elector Palatine hard pressed? A blow must be struck in the Protestant cause and the Spaniards be given a lesson. What more glorious or more opportune than to revive the old strategy of Drake and spring a surprise upon Cadiz? Buckingham's martial ardour was aroused; and out went a fleet on his authority to singe the Spanish King's beard once more. Unhappily, however, organisation was not one of Buckingham's strong points, and the King's beard was pretty safe. The fleet, indeed, reached Spain; but that was as much as it could boast. The crews were a mere rabble; their ships half-rotten, their stores uneatable, their leaders fools. A single fort was taken; the sailors got horribly drunk, and the expedition sailed home again defeated and disgraced. If Spain had been her ancient self, still worse might well have followed; but luckily for England her star was on the wane; her energies had been expended on the profitless task of filling her treasuries

with gold; and now not all the wealth of the New World could avail to save her from decline. That great nation, once mistress of the seas and foremost champion of the Catholic faith, was sinking rapidly into the rank of a second-rate power.

Richelieu and the Huguenots.—In the place of Spain rose France, strongly and skilfully governed by the ablest statesman of the day, the Cardinal Richelieu. Anticipating the schemes of Louis XIV, Richelieu played for the aggrandisement of France rather than for the benefit of Rome; and to suit his own ambitions he prolonged the futile horrors of the Thirty Years' War, when they might well have ended. Catholic though he was, Richelieu saw in the German Emperor¹ France's most dangerous rival; and from this he argued that the rebel German Protestants were France's most useful friends. When, therefore, the Protestants were sore beset, when their new champion, Gustavus Adolphus, the fighting King of Sweden, had ended his brief career of victory at Lutzen and, there meeting his death in 1632, had left his German allies much predisposed for peace, Richelieu hurried in to fan the flames of war. French help put new heart into the failing Protestant cause, and for sixteen weary years hostilities dragged on. Whole tracts of German country were ravaged and left desolate, so that fully two centuries later the effects might still be felt. Towns were gutted. Half the population starved to death. Two or three hundred persons were all the inhabitants remaining in Berlin. Utterly worn out, both parties longed for peace; and at length, by the Treaty of Westphalia, Protestants and Catholics came to terms. Henceforth they agreed to differ: each prince was to choose the religion of his State; and thus after thirty years of inconclusive warfare things stood very much as they had stood before. But Germany (for the time at least) was ruined; what little unity the Empire once possessed had vanished; and out of the wreck of its dismemberment France, thanks to Richelieu's policy, secured a valuable pick—fruitful seed of jealousies to come—the fair province of Alsace. So it was that, while Charles and his subjects were busy quarrelling at home, Europe was learning to bow to the French King's sway. Throughout the century England's eyes were shut to the new danger, and when at its close she awoke to a sense of her blindness, it was to find in her old rival the new mistress of the world.

La Rochelle and English Grievances.—All this, however, lay still in the future; and to suppose that Charles and Buckingham foresaw such things would be to credit them with qualities to which neither of the two could lay the smallest claim. All they did was to pick a needless

¹ It would perhaps be well to remind ourselves of the Emperor's exact position. The Emperor of the numerous states of Germany—the Palatinate, Saxony, Brandenburg, and the rest—was *elected* by the princes of those states, who came thus to be called Electors. By this time it had become the traditional practice to elect the ruling member of the Austrian House of Hapsburg; so that the Emperor of Germany was also invariably ruler of Austria too. His power over Germany, never very great, was now rapidly vanishing altogether, as the princes of the various states became more powerful and independent.

quarrel with the French Cardinal just at the time when their German friends were in the sorest straits and when Richelieu's assistance would have been most welcome. It is idle, however, to look for any rhyme or reason in their policy. Buckingham had no guiding star except his own ambition, and here, as usual, it led him into the most reckless freaks. Having failed so disastrously to win laurels at Cadiz, he resolved to try his luck again at La Rochelle. This famous sea-board fortress, situated between the Loire and the Garonne, was the rallying-point of the French Huguenots, who were now once again at war with their fellow-countrymen. Though ready enough, as we have seen, to support the Protestants in Germany, Richelieu would tolerate no Protestants at home. He had renewed the attack upon the Huguenots, driven them to rebellion, and beleaguered them closely in the town of La Rochelle. Hither, in 1626, he invited Charles to send the English fleet to help him, and Charles, having lately married a young French princess, Henrietta Maria, own sister to the ruling King, was in an awkward fix, and he actually complied with the request. The fleet was lent to France, for whatever its aid was worth; this, as it proved, was not worth very much. and the Huguenots still held out. The English people meanwhile were more than usually indignant at this extraordinary move: and next year, without giving any reason in particular, Charles and his favourite changed their tack. Breaking with France, they took up the cudgels on the Huguenots' behalf. A miserable army was called up, drilled for a fortnight on the English coast, and sent across, under the command of Buckingham himself, to relieve the besieged town. The venture failed, as it was bound to fail. The English did not even make good their footing on the Isle of Rhé, which lay opposite Rochelle. Reinforcements came too late to avert disaster, and forty British flags were left in the Frenchmen's hands to be sent to Paris and hung upon the walls of Notre Dame. The national pride, born of a hundred triumphs in the war with Spain, had received a mortal wound; and when Buckingham returned from his ill-starred expedition, there was not a guttersnipe in all the streets of London but loathed his very name.

It was now or never for the representatives of England to say their say and to assert the right of sharing in the government with which the King and Buckingham had so wilfully and mischievously trifled. Parliament was no assemblage of tame talkers. It abounded in men of action, small squires and yeoman farmers from the country, merchants and master-craftsmen from the towns, the class of folk who had made England what she was. Some of them had known their country in the days of her former greatness; all had heard from their fathers' lips how she had dealt with Spain; and seeing how her affairs thus wantonly mismanaged by an impudent upstart of the Court, her fleets and her money wasted and her fair name dragged in the dirt, they were stung with a sense of intolerable disgrace. It was no mean or selfish spirit that prompted the great movement which sought at first to limit and finally to break the sovereign's power for mischief and mismanagement. Its leaders were

persons of substance who had little to gain and everything to lose by their defiance of the King.

There was John Hampden, a Buckinghamshire squire, who consented to stand his trial and be fined rather than pay what he considered an illegal tax. There was Pym, who had studied at Oxford and who sacrificed his chances at the Bar to the call of a far more perilous, though nobler, cause. Less conspicuous than these, but by pedigree connected with Henry VIII's great minister, was the young Oliver Cromwell, who at one point resolved to quit the country if the cause of liberty were lost. Above all, there was Sir John Eliot, the daring spokesman and master-mind of that House of Commons, who paid for his courage and his patriotism by a cruel imprisonment that killed him. Between such men and Charles there was more than a mere divergence of interests or opinion. They moved in a different world, and they could no more work together than oil can mix with water or fire combine with snow. Thus from the very outset the quarrel was inevitable.

The tax question began it. Parliament threw down the gage by refusing to grant Charles the custom-dues for life. Though the grant had been made as a matter of course to all preceding sovereigns, they now proposed instead to license the collection of the dues from year to year and subject always to the King's correct behaviour. This was a heavy blow; for without money Charles could scarcely govern even in time of peace, much less could he undertake campaigns for the relief of La Rochelle. So he took the custom-dues with or without leave; and, not content with this, he imposed a compulsory loan upon private individuals. Such an act was quite illegal; and many refused to lend the money which they could never hope to see again. Charles, however, would take no denial. Eighty gentlemen were clapped promptly into prison. Others of less account were deliberately chosen for service in the army; and public feeling was soon roused to fever pitch. But there was worse to follow. The army, so wretchedly equipped for the Rochelle campaign, was still more wretchedly provided when it came home again. These men, who were at best the scum of town and country, were planted down at random among the civil populace. Many were billeted on private householders, more particularly on those who had refused the King's forced loan. Undisciplined, half-mutinous, and short of food and pay, they took to plundering and pilfering broadcast. Peaceful citizens went in terror of their lives, and dared not go to church of a Sunday and leave their homes exposed to the mercy of these marauders. There was but one remedy, and to it the authorities now too hastily resorted. Martial Law was proclaimed, and executions followed thick and fast among the unruly soldiers. When nerves are overstrung, men take fright readily; and instead of applauding this stern suppression of disorder the outraged citizens condemned it. In short, the display of military force had but one effect—it increased their dark suspicion and foreboding.

Petition of Right.—Such was the temper of the people when in 1628 a new Parliament was called to Westminster. What followed is

well known. The Commons drew up a famous document which has gone down to history under the title of the Petition of Right. In it their chief grievances were severally set forth. They demanded, first, that no tax or loan should be exacted "without the common consent of Parliament"; second, that no man should be imprisoned or detained without due formality or legal cause; third, that billeting of soldiers should be discontinued; and fourth, that Martial Law should be withdrawn. It was with no light heart that the Petition was debated. The members as they spoke were stirred to deep emotion. "Sir Robert Philips mingled his words with weeping; and Sir Edward Coke, seeing the desolation likely to ensue, was forced to sit down when he began to speak through the abundance of the tears: the Speaker himself in his speech could not refrain from weeping and shedding tears." These men knew well that they were placing their own lives in jeopardy; yet it was not for this they wept, but for the unhappy country whose cause they had so earnestly at heart. How little impression all this made upon the King we may well guess. The Petition he regarded as an insult to his crown; and he would have rejected it forthwith but for one awkward fact. He stood at the moment in sore straits for money; he was planning a new expedition for the relief of La Rochelle; and, provided their grievances should find redress, the Commons had made the offer of a liberal sum. For a week Charles wavered; then his financial needs prevailed over his pride. He yielded with an ill grace and set the Petition on the Statute Book.

It was a signal triumph for Parliament; but complete victory was still as far off as ever. They had given a check to the King's illegal practices, but they had not touched the source from which these sprang. And now, not for the first time indeed, though it proved to be the last, they opened a direct attack upon the Duke of Buckingham himself. In this, however, they were to find themselves on very different ground. Charles was adamant. He would not admit the right of Parliament to criticise his ministers. He had no intention of abandoning the policy to which he had set his hand. He thought it sheer treachery to go back upon his friend. Parliament might as well have spoken to the winds. At that very moment Buckingham was preparing the new expedition to Rochelle. Heedless of all remonstrances and threats, he persisted in his plans; and the Commons grew desperate for some means to overthrow him. They might have spared their pains.

While the Duke in that mid-August was busy at Portsmouth arranging the details of the embarkation, there might have been seen tramping down the dusty Hampshire road a seedy individual, down at heels and out at elbows, nearly penniless and half-starving. It was an officer, John Felton by name, who had served under Buckingham at La Rochelle, had there been refused promotion, and when the campaign was over had been turned adrift like countless others with his salary unpaid. His crazy mind was now set upon revenge against the supposed author of his late misfortunes. Arrived at Portsmouth he purchased a large knife for the

sum of tenpence; and one morning, as Buckingham came out from breakfast at the inn where he was quartered, Felton was lying in wait. He sprang forward, and with a cry of "God have mercy on thy soul" he struck home with his knife. Buckingham fell dead. The news travelled quickly through the country and the people went mad with joy. Felton's health was toasted in the London streets; popular songs were composed in his honour; and for fear of outrage the Duke's body was buried privately, while a mock funeral was arranged to dupe the mob. Meantime the King, as he nursed the one great sorrow of his life, was studying revenge; and the people were to pay bitterly for the work of the tenpenny knife.

Dismissal of Parliament.—Its commander being dead, the expedition sailed without him to Rochelle, and, as was to be expected, it succeeded no better than the first. The men refused to fight, and under the very eyes of the English captains the Huguenots surrendered to their enemies. Charles took to heart the humiliating lesson; and from thenceforth he meddled no more in continental politics. He left Catholics and Protestants to fight it out among themselves, and turned his attention wholly to affairs at home. His mind was now made up. Since Parliament would not fall in with his own ideas of government, he had resolved to rule without them. In the spring of 1629 he issued orders for their adjournment. Temper was rising high; and the Commons did not disperse without a scene which showed the ugly symptoms of a more violent mood. As the Speaker was about to leave his chair—the customary signal for the rising of the House—two members stepped forward, seized him by the shoulders, and held him forcibly to his seat. Shouts were raised; and there was a brief struggle to set him free. Somebody locked the door and put the key in his pocket; and while the King, who was approaching with a band of soldiers, was kept storming at the entrance, a solemn protest was read out denouncing any man who should advise or counsel illegal innovations in religion or taxation as "a capital enemy of this kingdom and the Commonwealth." That done, the House broke up. They were not to meet at Westminster again till eleven years were past, and when they met it was upon the eve of the Rebellion.

Parliament had thrown down the challenge with a vengeance. There was no room now for compromise; and it is a question whether the members had not in some measure overdone their part. Whatever his misdeeds or illegalities, they had never given Charles the shadow of a chance. They had refused to recognise his need for money. They had met with flat opposition every policy he pursued. They had offered no basis whatsoever for a mutual understanding. There were many, moreover, who still looked upon the crown as a solemn and almost sacred institution; to these the Commons' behaviour towards the King was shocking in the extreme; many waverers were actually converted to his side by the disloyal agitation; and it is not too much to say that during these years the Royalist Party of the civil war began to take its birth. Nor can it be denied that the Commons were laying claim to novel powers. Hith-

erto it had been the function of Parliament to advise the King's Government, but not themselves to govern. That, whatever might be said, was the King's business, and the majority of Englishmen were as yet content to leave it to the King. But there is another side to the picture. That the Commons had excuse enough need not be said. If they were overhasty or impatient in their acts, they had suffered every sort of provocation. What they did they did with their eyes open. They were taking their lives in their hands and they knew it. Each man of them was conscious that every vote given against the King might prove a warrant for his imprisonment or death. Nor were such fears unfounded. One victim above all was singled out for the royal vengeance. Sir John Eliot, the great-souled leader of the Commons throughout these stormy days, was tried for sedition and committed to the Tower. His cell was damp; he caught consumption, and, as the King would not sanction his removal, he soon died. Charles was not naturally a cruel man, but his heart was becoming hardened by the events of these last years; and when Eliot's son asked leave to take his father's body home, Charles refused. "Let him be buried," he said, "in the church of the parish where he died." So Eliot was buried like a common convict in the prison graveyard. The King had killed the people's champion; and, if wide before, the breach was wider now.

CHAPTER IX

CHARLES THE AUTOCRAT

If Parliament had shown itself rash, the King was now to show himself more so. For eleven years, from 1629 to 1641, he embarked upon an audacious experiment, which amounted to nothing less than an attempt to put back the clock five hundred years and to ignore the whole growth of the English constitutional machinery. Charles, in fact, tried to govern, as John and Henry III had one time governed, in the style of an absolute King. There he sat at Westminster in lonely state, issuing his decrees, gathering in his taxes, and imprisoning defaulters as though Parliament had never existed and England was back in the early Middle Ages once more. Even the methods he employed were mediæval. He revived obsolete prerogatives long-since forgotten—of feudal tenure, forest law, and such-like. He made free use of the Star Chamber Court, wisely instituted by the first Tudor king to deal with high-born rebels and put an end to civil war, but now, in a comparatively peaceful realm, a superfluous survival. He raked up old precedents for new taxation; and one of these in particular caused a tremendous stir. It had been the habit of early English kings to collect money for the fleet from seaboard towns; and Charles, being anxious also to build up his navy, revived this old device. He demanded ship money, not (be it noted) from the coastal counties only, but from inland parts as well. The tax was bitterly re-

sented. John Hampden, the Parliamentary leader, refused downright to pay; and was haled into the courts. Lawyers, who were too often more loyal than just, declared that, since the King's authority was absolute, all acts of Parliament curtailing it were null and void, and, with a servility unworthy of the English bench, a majority of the judges voted in Charles's support. Hampden was rigorously fined. Methods such as these, despotic as they were, had at least the merit of strong government. They might have succeeded if Englishmen had been a tamer race, and if the King's chief ministers had been men of tact. This, however, was just what they were not. Charles was but too well served by his subordinates. They administered in the same spirit in which he planned; and for the final tragedy of the Rebellion none were more responsible than the two men on whose fidelity Charles chiefly rested—Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford,¹ and the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud.

Strafford and Ireland.—The Earl of Strafford's was a curious history. He had not always been a King's man. As plain Thomas Wentworth he had sat in Parliament and, so long as Buckingham was alive, had worked hand in glove with the Parliamentary leaders. Then his views changed. For, much as he had disliked the way in which Charles misused his power, he still believed that a King should be master of his Parliament and not its slave; and seeing his friends pushing their claims, as it seemed to him, too far, he determined to throw all his weight upon the other side. Whatever this man did, he did with his whole heart; and if as Wentworth he was the King's declared opponent, as the Earl of Strafford he was among Charles's most faithful friends. His strength of character and steadfast loyalty were not things lightly to be thrown away. Charles saw their value, and he found a use for them (as things turned out)—a very fatal use.

It is clear that, if the rebellious spirit of the country was at all to be held in check, the first essential was some sort of standing army. In England none existed; nor indeed could it exist, so suspicious was the people of military force. But there was one part of the kingdom where the need for a permanent garrison was undeniable—the turbulent and disaffected province across the Irish Sea. It was an accident perhaps, but an accident fraught with grave possibilities and dangerous consequences, that in 1632 Strafford was sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy to Ireland. There he found a heavy task before him. Since the days of Elizabeth and Mountjoy's governorship, Irish affairs had gone steadily from bad to worse. Fresh rebellions had been followed by fresh confiscations; and what Elizabeth had done to Munster in the south, James had done to Ulster in the north. Land had there too been taken from the Catholic peasants and allotted to Protestant settlers from this side the sea. Many Scots had crossed the water to populate Belfast, and

¹ Though created a peer in 1628, Wentworth did not actually receive the title of Strafford till shortly before his death. It seems, however, more convenient to call him throughout by his more familiar name.

London merchants with an eye to trade had given a new name and a new importance to Londonderry on the Foyle. Between these alien interlopers and the native Irishmen there was then (as there is still to-day) a bitter and undying hate, and to drive a team so ill-assorted and so quarrelsome called for a strong hand. Strafford, however, was nothing if not strong, and he ruled with a rod of iron. The Protestant settlers he encouraged, taking great pains to promote the growing of flax and the weaving of linen, for which Ulster soon became and has remained so famous. The native Irish, on the other hand, he kept severely in their place, treating them much as Europeans have been wont to treat the black man in the East, and earning by his harsh, unsympathetic measures the nickname of "Black Tom the Tyrant." Yet Strafford's policy was successful. He gave to Ireland a semblance of prosperity and an order such as it had never known since the beginning of all time. Nor, as we have hinted, did he neglect to form a serviceable army; and very soon there was a standing force in Dublin such as no English king had possessed for many a long year, well-disciplined, well-officered, and well-paid, and ready, it might be at no distant date, for use against the King's enemies elsewhere than Ireland. There for the moment we must leave that army and the man who made it. We shall hear of both again.

Laud and the Puritans.—The other henchman of the King was, as we have said, the Archbishop William Laud. Laud was an energetic little man, with an extremely rigid conscience and a face like a rat. His mind did not move, like Strafford's, on large and important lines. He worried himself and others over trifles; and, conceiving it to be his mission to set the English Church to rights, he dealt with the petty details of ceremony and ritual in the narrow spirit of fussy martinet. Much of his time was spent in travelling round from parish to parish and from see to see, struggling, wherever he went, to bring the careless clergy into line. He had the communion tables moved from the centre of the church to the east end (for he held what we should call extremely High Church views about the Sacrament). He saw to it that services were properly conducted. He was particularly stern against misuse of sacred buildings, and in St. Paul's Cathedral, where men were then wont to meet to transact business and pass the time of day, he very rightly insisted on more decent ways. There were many scandals of an even graver sort which called for the sternest measures; and had Laud confined his attention to the churches and the clergy, he would but have done his duty; but with much less wisdom, and with far more perilous results, he proceeded further to make a dead set upon the Puritans. He forced them to attend church, fined them if they did not, and made it as hard for them as he could to hold religious views which differed from his own. One curious point of difference was the observance of the Sabbath.

The old idea of keeping Sunday, derived in the main from mediæval times, was that after the services in church were over the rest of the day should be devoted to sport and jollity of various kinds. Just as in the Catholic countries of the Continent to-day horse-racing is the popular

amusement after Mass, so it was then the fashion on Sunday afternoons to see a theatre or hold a shooting match or cock-fight. To the Puritans, who regarded the Sabbath as a day for pious meditation, holy books, and solemn faces, all this frivolity seemed so much sacrilege; and in such matters surely it is a man's right, if he has any rights at all, to follow his own conscience; yet will it be believed that Charles, upon Laud's advice, issued a Book of Sunday Sports and a declaration to be read in churches which positively commanded everyone to take a part in them! If Laud thought this a likely way to reconcile the erring Puritan, he was in grievous error. The Puritan was ten times more stubborn and defiant than he was before, and outspoken protest rose on every hand. Laud behaved like a nervous schoolmaster, dealing out punishments too mild to intimidate, yet severe enough to tease, and trying to stamp down criticism by a mean persecution of his critics. One man named Prynne, a lawyer, spent his life in writing pamphlets against Laud's so-called reforms. In 1633 he was condemned to stand in the pillory and have a portion of his ears cut off. Nothing deterred, Prynne published four years later an attack upon the stage, entitled "Histrio-mastix," or the "Actor's Whip." He was arrested once again, and condemned this time to suffer imprisonment for life and to lose what was remaining of his ears. This brutal part of the new sentence was carried out in Palace Yard. A huge crowd gathered from all London; and the yell of horror which went upon from ten thousand throats was a note of warning to which, while there was yet time, the stubborn King would have done well to listen.

Puritans' Spirit.—Nor did it stand alone: there were other proofs, for those who had eyes to see them, of the Puritans' invincible resolve. Disgusted with their treatment, many of the more convinced and ardent spirits left their homes and migrated to the shores of North America, where not so long before others had led the way. In 1620 a handful of English Puritans, who had been sheltering in Holland, had come back and sailed from Plymouth in a ship called the "Mayflower." Striking the American coast in the neighbourhood of Cape Cod, they had founded there the first proper British colony beyond the seas. Though pestered by the native Indians and suffering greatly from the cold, they had held on bravely, and the prospect was soon sufficiently cheering to tempt other Puritans to follow in their wake. Under the pressure of Laud's persecution no less than 20,000 men and women left England to seek liberty of life and conscience in the West.¹ But for every Puritan who left the country there were still a dozen who remained at home, sullen, dissatisfied, and sore. If they said little and did less, they thought the more; and slowly they were forced to the conviction that the King and his advisers were the friends of Rome and the enemies of Christian truth. Charles was in reality no Catholic; neither was Laud. But Laud's "High

¹ This movement was not discouraged, either now or later; for the Stuarts saw a double advantage in getting rid of such troublesome subjects from England and in developing colonial resources beyond seas.

Church" opinions led him at times very dangerously near Papistry, and Charles's obvious sympathy for his Roman Catholic queen gave rise to the suspicion that he was a Catholic in his heart. The more, therefore, the Puritans considered it, the more they became convinced that the old tyranny of priestcraft was recovering its hold, and that the cause of English liberty was lost, and their fathers had fought and died for it in vain, unless they too should strike a blow, and strike it soon. Sober and serious fellows as they were, Laud's persecution was turning them slowly but surely to fanatics; a few more insults, another year or two of blundering oppression, and from fanatics they would turn to rebels out and out. Nor was it a mere accident of fate that those who were thus ready to take arms for their beliefs were the same men who were ready also to take arms for civil freedom. The Puritans and the Parliamentarians were to all intents and purposes one party. The middle-class Englishmen of which it was composed were not perhaps clear thinkers, but they hated tyranny in all its forms; they saw that Ship Money and the Book of Sports were both part of the same tyrant's game, that Prynne and Pym were fighting the same battle; and when at last they came to strike their blow in the cause of liberty, they rose armed with the Bible in one hand and the Petition of Right in the other. Charles had offended against both.

Scotland and the Prayer-Book.—Thus, during the ten years' lull which preceded Parliament's return and the breaking of the storm, Laud in England was steadily increasing the unpopularity of the crown, while Strafford in his own way was attempting in Ireland to build up its military strength. Yet it was neither in England nor in Ireland that the catastrophe began, but in Charles's own motherland of Scotland. Though now united with the English by the tie of a common crown, the Scots still stood much aloof from the main stream of English politics. They acknowledged, indeed, the King who sat at Westminster, but not the Parliament. They held Parliaments of their own in Edinburgh, made their own laws, and resented outside interference mightily. Their Church was equally a thing apart. The Presbyterian "Kirk," as it was called, was the most democratic institution in the British Isles. Each parish elected its own "minister" and the lay "elders" who controlled him. Delegates from these parish councils were sent, together with the ministers, to the Presbytery or council of the district; and the district Presbyteries in their turn sent delegates to the "General Assembly," which controlled the whole policy of the national Kirk. Thus the entire government of the Presbyterian body was in the hands of laymen rather than of priests, and was dictated from below by the votes of the congregations rather than by the authority of bishops from above. In fact, the very keynote of the Scotsmen's organisation was to remove these "bellie-gods," as they rudely called the bishops, and to manage religion for themselves. James, however, true to the policy which he pursued in England, had pressed for the reestablishment of bishops, and, to their intense disgust, had forced his countrymen to accept them. It now

remained for Charles and Laud to make the bishop's rule intolerable to the Scots. To Laud, as we have seen, the letter of the law was everything, the spirit nothing.

The Scots were intensely pious, and talked of little else than doctrine and religion, but their ideas of ritual were far from satisfactory to His Grace. The fact was, they positively abhorred it. They disliked kneeling at the altar, for fear the practice should give rise to idolatrous ideas. They attended communion but twice or thrice a year. They had no set form of service and used no book of prayer, but (as they do still) preferred the minister to compose his prayers upon the inspiration of the moment. All this appeared very wrong to Charles and Laud, and they resolved to end it. In 1637 they ordered that the English Prayer-Book, slightly altered, should henceforth be used in every Scottish kirk. The Scots blazed up in wrath; the new Service Book stank in their nostrils; it contained much that was taken direct from the old Latin liturgy, and its introduction seemed to them no better than barefaced Popery. When it was read for the first time in St. Giles', Edinburgh, there was an ugly scene. A woman named Jenny Geddes (or, as some think, a man in female clothes) made frequent interruptions, and at last, shouting out at the top of her voice, "Dost thou say a mass in my lug" (ear), she hurled a footstool straight at the minister's head. Everywhere it was the same. The reading of the book was a signal for riots, and a movement was set on foot to organise resistance. A Solemn League and Covenant was drawn up, pledging every man who signed to defend the true religion to the death, and the signing was begun in the dour Scots manner upon a tombstone in the Greyfriars Churchyard at Edinburgh. Nobles and peasants, laity and clergy flocked in with the same grim determination. Not a few cut their arms and signed in blood.

It is an ill day for his enemies when the Scotsman shows his teeth; and what was still worse for Charles was this, that, while the rebellious northerners could bite, he certainly could not. He had no standing army. The militia train-bands he was able to call out were execrably trained;¹ and, though he marched them up to the Scottish border and looked at the Scottish army which lay across the Tweed, he liked so little what he saw of it that he marched them home again. Thus the first of the so-called Bishops' wars was over without a blow being struck. It had one important consequence, however: it made Charles a new enemy and gave Parliament a new friend.

The day, however, for the great decision was now come. Having used force and failed, the King had two choices before him, either to yield to the wishes of his subjects or to use more force. He chose the latter, and, choosing, turned to the one person who understood the art of making war. Strafford became suddenly the man of the moment. In 1640 he received an urgent summons to present himself in England. It would by no means have displeased his master had he brought his army too. But the Irish army was still small; it seemed wiser for the moment to increase

¹ One day's drill a month was the ordinary routine for such militia.

its strength; so, leaving this task in the hands of his subordinates, Strafford hurried home alone to obey his master's summons. The duty laid upon him here was to create an English army which might succeed where the inefficient train-bands had so miserably failed. But in this there was an obvious difficulty. To raise a proper army without the proper funds was quite impracticable; and for Charles, who had now reached the limits of extortion, it was impossible to raise the funds unless a Parliament would vote them. Strafford saw the uncomfortable necessity and bowed to it. In the spring of 1640—after an absence of eleven years—a Parliament met once more at Westminster on his advice. The Short Parliament men called it; for it lost no time in quarrelling with the King, and was dismissed within a month without voting him a sou. Strafford proceeded to carry on his job as best he could, raising money by compulsory exactions and impressing forced recruits. But Pym and the Parliamentarians were not to be so easily fobbed off. In Strafford and all that Strafford stood for they saw the last obstacle to the realisation of their hopes. Between him and themselves it was henceforward a struggle literally to the death; and they saw that had they but the courage to continue, they must win. For the trump card was in their hands. *They had a secret understanding with the real master of the situation—the undefeated and undefeatable army of the Scots.*

In the autumn of 1640 the Scots moved south and crossed the border. They met with next to no resistance from Strafford's pressed recruits. They marched on Newcastle and seized it; and invasion stared Charles and his general in the face. There was no alternative but tame surrender to the invaders' terms, and it was now that the canny Scots prepared their master-stroke. They demanded a huge indemnity to buy them out of England, and in so doing they played deliberately into the hands of Pym and their English friends. For there was only one way for Charles to raise the money which they asked, and that was by the vote of Parliament; and, whether he liked it or no, there now remained no choice for him but to submit to Parliament's demands. Strafford, in short, was beaten; yet even now he was unwilling to acknowledge his defeat. He still dreamt desperately of winning through by force of arms. At one time he reminded the King of that army in Ireland, which might be used, he said, "for the reduction of this kingdom"—a threat which was afterwards to cost him dear. Later, and when it was too late, he formed a plan to invite all the Parliamentary leaders to a military review and entrap them in a bunch. But Charles's nerve had failed him. Falling into the trap that the Scots had laid for his feet, he summoned Parliament once more, and humbly asked them to save him by buying the Scotsmen out. As the leaves were falling there met at Westminster the men who were within a year to raise England in arms against the King, and who were not to part again till their victory was won and they had brought Charles himself to judgment and to death. Meanwhile, from the moment of their meeting, Strafford's doom was sealed.

The Scots and Strafford's Trial.—As his whole grand scheme of a

military despotism came crashing to the ground and Strafford realised that he had failed, there still remained for him one hope. Charles had promised him solemnly and on his honour as a king that not a hair of his head should be touched. Charles still possessed a king's power. Would he keep a king's promise? On that slender thread hung Strafford's life. The Commons at any rate were in deadly earnest now; they had Strafford arrested and put upon his trial—as his master later was—in the Great Hall at Westminster. The plan was to impeach him for high treason; but there were difficulties here. Treason is, strictly speaking, an offence against the crown; and Strafford had certainly not offended against Charles, unless it were by serving him too well. A desperate effort was made to prove that his attack on English liberties was treason, not to the King perhaps, but to the State. Yet here again there was a hitch. The famous threat to use the Irish army for the reduction of "this kingdom" was brought up. Yet what did "this kingdom" mean? Strafford averred that he meant Scotland. Pym and his friends were convinced that he meant England, but they could not prove their point. Finally, throwing all justice to the winds, they moved for a Bill of Attainder, declaring that *treason had been done*, and dispensing with any formal proof. The Bill was passed; and it now needed nothing but the King's signature to bring Strafford to the block.

That night—it was a Saturday—the citizens of London crowded round the Palace of Whitehall, and, as Charles wrestled with his conscience, he heard outside his windows the sound before which the most powerful king must tremble, the dull, continuous howling of an angry mob. All that night and all through the following day Charles weighed his friend's life and his own safety in the balance; and late on Sunday night he signed. Strafford took the news very quietly. "Put not your trust in princes" was his only protest; and three days later he was led out for execution on Tower Hill. As he passed upon his way to the scaffold beneath the outer windows of the cells, a pair of hands appeared at one, giving him benediction. They were the hands of Laud. The archbishop, too, had been committed to the Tower, where, after four years of solitary confinement, he likewise was to die. Parliament had doubly triumphed; and, having lost (or, as some would say, betrayed) his two best friends, Charles stood alone.

Irish Massacre and Remonstrance.—There was now revealed in the King's character that extraordinary and fatal vein of self-conceit of which we spoke above. Though he had sacrificed his friend to save himself, he would make no sacrifice of his own beliefs. While he was willing to write Strafford down a traitor, he refused to admit, whether outwardly or inwardly, that he himself was in the wrong. What is still more amazing, he fondly imagined that even now, after all that had occurred, he could outwit Parliament as though they had been children. He made futile pretences of yielding upon this point and that, roused hopes which he could hardly have fulfilled, gave promises which he never intended to perform; and all the while he was drifting further and further from

all possibility of an honest understanding with the men he sought to trick. He was listening with increased respect to the inflammatory counsels of that dangerous woman, his Roman Catholic queen. He was in constant correspondence with the emissaries of the Pope. One might almost believe that he would have turned Papist to defeat the Puritans and save his crown. Such a condition of affairs could not last long. If Charles was unrepentant, Pym and his fellows were never more in earnest. At every turn their suspicions of his dishonesty and his sympathy with Rome received, as it appeared to them, fresh confirmation, and then at last these suspicions were clinched beyond a doubt by a strange and sinister event.

In the autumn of 1641, just a year from Strafford's death, the news suddenly reached England that rebellion had broken out in Ireland and that the Catholic natives had turned upon the Scottish and English settlers with a fury and brutality that beggared thought. Thousands of Protestants had been murdered in cold blood. Others had been stripped naked and turned adrift to die. Exaggerated fears put the sum total of the victims at over thirty thousand. England was aghast. The wildest rumours were afloat; and, as is usual at such times, all sense of sober reason was completely lost. Without the slightest shadow of foundation Protestants, in Parliament and out of it, laid the whole blame for these Catholic barbarities at the door of the King and his Roman Catholic queen. How or why Charles could have intended it they did not stop to ask; but, even supposing he were innocent of such a crime, they went on to argue that the necessary sequel would be more dangerous still. Charles would undoubtedly demand an army with which to restore the peace in Ireland, and how could he be trusted to confine it to that use? Goaded by these suspicions and these fears, Pym and his followers took a last desperate step. They drew up and presented before Parliament a long and vigorous denunciation of all Charles's offences since the first year of his reign and a statement of various indispensable reforms. This was on November 22nd, 1641. All through that day and far into the night the Grand Remonstrance, as this document was called, was debated point by point, and not without many heart-searchings and qualms. It was in effect an open challenge, an ultimatum to the King; and many among the members shrunk back from this last plunge. Finally, in the small hours of the morning, the vote was taken, and by the narrow majority of eleven the Grand Remonstrance passed. Nor did its authors stop short there. They proceeded at once to introduce a Bill vesting the whole control of military force in the hands of Parliament.

This was a tremendous departure from tradition; the army or the right to raise an army had always been the King's; and the loss of this prerogative meant good-bye to all Charles's pretensions and ambitions. Charles was in no mood for such surrender; and he flung the challenge back. Accusing Pym and Hampden and three other members of treasonable dealings with the Scots (and, whether treasonable or no, such dealings were a fact), he laid plans for their arrest. To touch a member of

Parliament within the shelter of the House and during the performance of his duties is the gravest breach of the assembly's privilege. But the queen egged her husband on. "Go and pull out the rogues by the ears"; and with 300 redcoats at his back Charles went down to Westminster. When he entered, he was just two hours too late. One of the queen's ladies had blabbed. The five members in question had been forewarned, and they had fled by water down the Thames. Charles looked round, saw they were not there, and realised that he was baulked. "I see the birds are flown," he said, and quietly and courteously, like the fine gentleman he was, withdrew. But the deed was done. He had attempted the liberties of Parliament with military force—and, as he passed out of the door, men in the lobbies set their pistols at the cock. Before many hours were past the citizens were up in arms—the train-bands were called out, not now to serve the King—and within a week Charles had fled the city, never to return but as a prisoner. Though it still wanted several months before either side was ready for the fray, Charles and his subjects were at war.

CHAPTER X

THE CIVIL WAR TO MARSTON MOOR

Cavaliers and Roundheads.—"Who's for King Charles?" and who for Parliament? This was now the question very anxiously and earnestly debated in many puzzled hearts. Nor was the answer easy; for if to take arms against the King seemed a crime akin to sacrilege, yet to support him meant the revival of an extinct despotism, and an end to all the privilege and freedom which Englishmen, alone among the nations, had so hardly won. These were the two alternatives. But although for every man there was now a choice to make between them, it must not be supposed that everybody necessarily made it. The fact is that the great mass of the nation was not much interested one way or the other. The city poor and the country labourers, three-quarters perhaps of the total population, took no willing part in the great struggle; and if they fought at all, it was under some compulsion, being taken to swell the retinue of the local squire or pressed into the train-bands of the towns; otherwise they held aloof. The Civil War, in short, was not like the Thirty Years' War in Germany, a national uprising. Only the upper and the middle classes were at all deeply or desperately involved in it; and, broadly speaking, it would be true to say that it was a struggle between the upper class upon the one side and the middle class upon the other.

Ranged round the King were the men of the old and famous county families, earls and marquises, baronets and landed gentlemen, drawn to the side of Charles partly perhaps by a consciousness that, if his crown should fall, their coronets and titles would soon be sure to follow, but partly too by a fine sense of traditional fidelity—a fidelity which en-

dowed the Royalists' enthusiasm with something like the glamour of a sacred cause and which has made men recognise in their forlorn adventure a last dying flicker of the old-world chivalry. For your Cavalier came of that ancient stock which produced the mediæval knight. There was fighting in his blood. He had a fine seat in the saddle and a quick wrist with the sword. He was equally reckless in a battle or a drinking bout; and his light-hearted joviality, his love of song, his taste for extravagant and gay costume, his warlike swagger, and his handsome flowing curls have combined to make him the darling of latter-day romance.

The Parliamentarians were cut upon a very different pattern. They were drawn from what the French would call the bourgeois class—well-to-do shopkeepers, brewers, merchants, attorneys, clerks, yeomen farmers, and a fair sprinkling of lesser country gentlemen. Such folk knew (as was natural) little or nothing about military art. They had to begin at the beginning, and it took them two good years before they got into their stride. But in warfare it is often the moral forces which count most; and the Parliamentarians were most determined fellows. They set their teeth and braced themselves to win, knowing well that, if they lost, England would be worth living in no more. Among their leaders, too, many were possessed of an extraordinarily deep religious zeal; and, since their example was infectious, the Parliamentarian army caught, as time went on, the spiritual enthusiasm of a crusading host. Like the Cavaliers, they too have made a unique impression upon history. The stern discipline and devoted piety of their lives, their hymn-singing before battle and their solemn thanksgivings in the hour of victory, their love of Biblical quotation, their hatred of oaths and all unseemly talk, even their dour honest faces, firm-set lips and ugly close-cropped hair, worn in deliberate contrast to the Cavaliers' long curls—these, too, have stirred the imagination of posterity and have given to the Roundhead character a curious and peculiar interest! It is as though the Old Testament warriors had come back to life and were marching out once more "with the praise of God upon their lips and the two-edged sword in their hands."¹

Broadly speaking, then, the blue blood of England was on Charles's side; the business men against him. Exceptions, of course, there were in plenty. Peers such as Lord Essex were to be found in the Roundhead army; and even from the House of Commons itself upwards of eighty members forsook their colleagues and took the northern road to join the King.² But amid all the confusion of this perplexing conflict, which

¹ This picture would, of course, hold true only of the later phases of the war. At first the Parliamentarians were anything but disciplined, and not in the bulk particularly pious. The habit of wearing short hair was, in the same way, by no means universal. To some extent it was a social distinction belonging to the lower and lower middle class. Many of the better-bred Parliamentarians wore long hair like Cavaliers, as the portraits of Milton, Cromwell, and others will show.

² Parliament, united though it was in the struggle against Strafford, had been split over the religious problem, when Pym moved the Root and Branch Bill to abolish bishops, and over the Grand Remonstrance which set Parliament above the Crown.

split families asunder and set fathers fighting against sons, there are certain broad and obvious lines of geographical demarcation which can still be drawn. The Roundhead strength lay, as has been said already, in the towns, and above all in the town where Parliament had made its



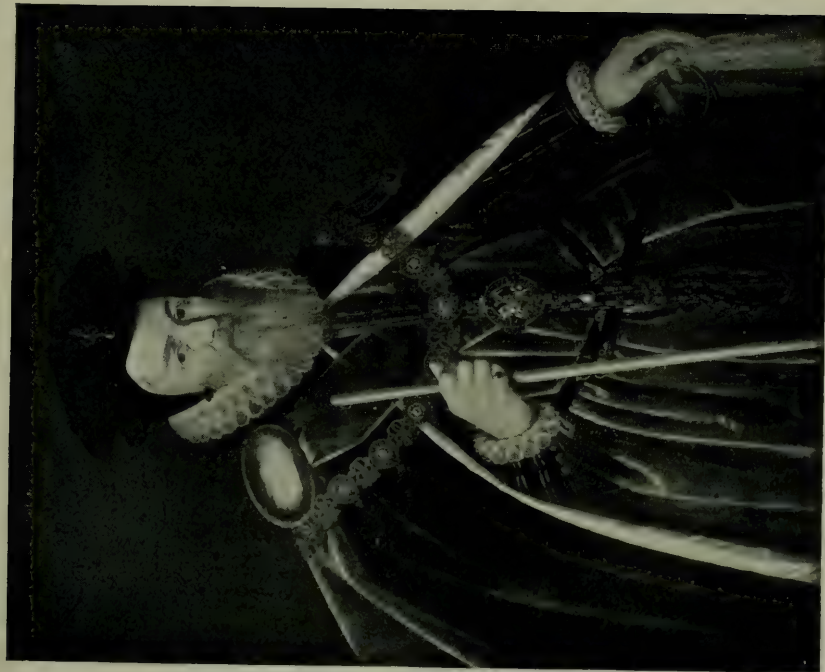
FIG. 25.

home. London was the pivot of the rebellion, the rallying centre of the Roundhead armies, the aim and goal of every Royalist advance. And with London went almost completely the adjoining counties of the south-east and east. Kent, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk were staunchly Parliamentary, and it was the men from these parts who eventually turned the scales and won the war. In the west and the north country, upon the other hand, where many of the nobles held their great estates and country seats, and where the King's cause was therefore strong, Parlia-

ment could count on less support. Yet even here, far as they lay from the true Roundhead area, the townsfolk were faithful to their comrades' cause; and it was of vital consequence, as shall be seen, that great cities such as Gloucester, Hull, and Plymouth stood out staunch and defiant against Charles, like Parliamentary islands in a Royalist sea. Throughout the first phase of the war, which lasted until Marston Moor in 1644, when the first real Parliamentarian victory was won, the tide of Royalist success flowed strong; it beat up the Thames valley against London; its backwash swept around these isolated cities of the north and west. But the effort was in vain. Its impetus was spent, and from Marston Moor onwards the ebb had decisively set in.

Military Strength of Parties.—All through the spring and summer of 1642 the preparations of both sides were hurried on. Infantry were trained in the use of the musket and the pike; for these two arms were then used in combination, the pikemen warding off the enemy's attack, while the musketeers discharged their volleys from behind the shelter of the pikes. The pikeman's weapon was a wooden shaft some sixteen feet in length with a two-foot blade at the end. It was not by any means an easy instrument to handle; but the musket was an even more cumbersome affair, four feet long from stock to muzzle, and so heavy that it had to be supported on a crutch like a machine-gun. The powder needed to be rammed down through the barrel; and the priming was fired by a "match" of burning tow. This was inevitably a lengthy process, and the musketeers were therefore worked in two relays, one of which was always loading while the other fired. Field-guns of a sort were also used, though their aim was seldom accurate; these had a range over upwards of a mile, throwing a solid metal ball up to 20 pounds in weight. But the most important arm was still, as long ago, the cavalry.

The old mail suits had now, of course, gone wholly out. The only defensive armour was a thick leather jerkin, or sometimes a steel cuirass; while a close-fitting steel cap was worn upon the head, with a projecting bar to shield the nose. Besides their sabres, the men carried flint-lock pistols at their saddle-bows, which they would learn to fire at the full gallop. Much attention was expended on their horsemanship; for upon the dash and vigour with which their charge was pressed hung, as a rule, the whole issue of the fight. It was seldom indeed that infantry would stand when once the horsemen on their flanks had been dispersed and their own rear lay open to the victorious troop. So it was that at the start the Royalists possessed a manifest advantage. Not merely was their cavalry recruited from a class long accustomed to the saddle, but it was trained under the eye of a cavalry commander of unusual skill. Charles had summoned from Germany his nephew the Prince Rupert, son of that luckless sister of his who had married the Elector Palatine. Rupert had seen much service in the German wars, and brought with him to England a knowledge of the latest tactics so successfully employed by Gustavus Adolphus and his Swedes. Following that model, he now taught his troopers to reserve their pistol-shots till the charge was car-



WILLIAM CECIL, FIRST BARON BURLEIGH

From the painting by Gheraerts



PRINCE RUPERT

From the painting by Lely

ried home, instead of the old half-hearted method of firing at short range and then wheeling off; and it was thanks to his training and his dashing leadership that in the earliest engagements the Cavaliers swept the opposing horsemen off every field.

Edgehill and the Triple Advance.—In August of 1642 both sides were ready to begin. Charles was at Nottingham. Essex and the Parliamentarians were feeling northwards toward him from their base at London. Charles, however, was still so weak in numbers that he sheered off westwards to recruit more men, drawing Essex after him the while. Then, with his end achieved, he swung round sharply in his tracks and made a bolt for London. It was a shrewd stroke, and he won a great momentary advantage. He had got between Essex's army and its base; and as that army came pelting home upon his wake, he faced about and trounced them severely at Edgehill. This first engagement might well have been decisive, had not two needless blunders spoilt Charles's plan. Rupert and his cavalry, victorious on the field, went scattering in pursuit of fleeing horsemen, when they should have rounded in upon the foot. The opportunity was lost and the Parliamentarian infantry escaped. The second blunder was more serious still. From Edgehill to London is no more than eighty miles; yet it was three full weeks before the Royalists approached the city; by then the demoralised enemy had time to rally, and they came too late. The London burghers had turned out in force and were entrenched across the road at Turnham Green. Charles lost his nerve, turned tail, and fell back without delivering his blow to Oxford, now and henceforward to be the Royalist Headquarters and the residence of a gay and frivolous Court. Thus inconclusively the year's campaigning ended, and with the whole broad valley of the Thames between them the two opposing forces lay inactive, mustering their strength for the effort of the spring.

Meanwhile desultory fighting had been going forward in many scattered villages and towns. Old castle defences were put into repair and saw days of desperate siege. Private companies under Royalist and Roundhead captains skirmished and plundered and waged minor warfare elsewhere than in the valley of the Thames. But the opening of 1643 was marked by a grand scheme of Royalist strategy, by which it was intended to knit up the efforts of these isolated bodies in a single vigorous and coherent plan. There were now three main groups of Cavalier activity which it was thus proposed, if possible, to combine. Of the central or west midland group Charles himself at Oxford was the virtual commander. In the north the Marquis of Newcastle had raised a troop of wild and warlike bordermen, expert from many a past brush with brigand Scots; and with these he was slowly but successfully reducing the Parliament's adherents in Leeds and Sheffield and other Yorkshire towns. In the extreme south-west a third army under Hopton was making equal headway. Taunton, Exeter, and Bristol fell to him in turn, and prospects here too looked very bright for the great Royalist plan. The idea was that, having reduced the districts in which they were

now employed, Newcastle's army from the north and Hopton's from the south-west should converge upon the valley of the Thames and, linking up with Charles's central force, should march all three together upon London.

If London were to fall, the war was as good as over. But that grand consummation of the projected triple march never took place; for the first and essential preliminary of the scheme broke down. Newcastle carried the other Parliamentary strongholds of the north; but he failed utterly at Hull. Revictualled and reinforced by sea (for the fleet had deserted Charles for Parliament), the garrison of that port, under the Lord Fairfax, defied all Newcastle's attempts. And when the time came for him to lead his army south, this proved a fatal hitch. His officers had homes and families in Yorkshire. They knew that no sooner would their backs be turned than the garrison in Hull would break out and scour the country; and, fearful of finding their homes in ashes when they came back again, they refused to march far afield, and so it was that Newcastle's northern army never kept its rendezvous with Charles. It was the same story in the south. Plymouth, which like Hull enjoyed the advantages of access to the sea, was still uncaptured when it was Hopton's turn to march; and for precisely the same reasons as the Yorkshiremen his troops refused to budge. So it remained for Charles and the west midland army to strike (if strike they should) alone. But here, too, the tenacity of a single Roundhead city upset the calculations of the King. Gloucester, like Hull and Plymouth, still held firm. The summer was wearing on; and, seeing that this menace on their rear must at all costs be removed, the Cavaliers began to press the siege more closely. Meanwhile in the whole year's campaigning the Londoners had taken little or no part. It was even questioned later whether my Lord Essex was as eager as he should have been to try conclusions with the King: in any case he and his army had been scandalously inert. But the call of Gloucester roused them; and, greatly daring, they set out up the Thames valley and across the Cotswold hills to its relief. They were now in fairly formidable numbers; and as they came in view of the beleaguered town, they had the satisfaction of seeing the enemy strike camp at their approach and melt away into the north. Gloucester was saved; but the men who had saved it had still to run the gauntlet home again. Among the country lanes round Newbury they ran into the arms of a large Royalist contingent, and only after a bitter day of inconclusive fighting among hedgerows did they make good their way along the London road. It was something, at any rate, that they were safe; it was something, too, that Gloucester had been relieved and that Charles's triple march upon the capital was foiled. But, take it all in all, the year of 1643 was a black year for Parliament. Many good towns had been lost in north and west. The one test in open field had been anything but cheering. Victory, in fact, seemed as far away as ever; and no leader had appeared to pull the party together or to weld the raw material of the citizen army into a first-rate fighting force. There must have been

sore misgivings in many Roundhead hearts at the prospect of the coming third year's war.

Scots Alliance and East Anglian Army.—Nevertheless, before the campaign of 1644 was joined, two things happened which were to put a very different complexion on affairs. First, the Parliamentarians secured the reinforcement of a new and valuable ally; and, secondly, they found, what was still more valuable, a heaven-born leader at last. The new ally was the Scots, who, since they evacuated Newcastle in 1641, had been mere idle spectators of the struggle. Their sympathies, however, with the Parliamentary party had never stood in doubt; from the start they had been in close communication with its leaders; and they were now prepared to lend an army to the cause, provided one preliminary condition were fulfilled. The condition was that English should abolish all bishops and accept the religious system of the Presbyterian Kirk. This did not seem much to ask. At the opening of the Long Parliament Pym had already produced a Bill for destroying the old Episcopal system "root and branch." Few members were now prepared to shed a tear over the disappearance of the bishops, though whether when it came to the point they would prefer the Scottish alternative was quite another matter. At the moment the Scottish assistance in the war seemed vastly more important, and Pym had little difficulty in persuading them that it was worth the price demanded. That great organiser of rebellion did not live to see the fruits of his diplomacy. Pym died in the last weeks of '43, but before he died Parliament had signed a pledge accepting Presbyterianism as the official Church of England. The Scots, for their part, were as good as their word, and their army descended into Yorkshire. There the tables were very swiftly turned to Parliament's advantage; and Newcastle's Royalist army now found itself between two fires, or rather three. As the Scots came at them from the north, Fairfax, so long pent up in Hull, ventured out once more into the open, and from the south a new East Anglian army was presently upon its way to join him. It was this army which contained the heaven-born leader of whom we spoke above.

In the autumn of '43 Parliament, desperate at the low ebb of their fortunes, had given a commission to the Earl of Manchester and four lieutenants to raise fresh troops in the counties of East Anglia. One of the four was a certain stolid, middle-aged landowner of Huntingdon, and his name was Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell was member of Parliament for his native place, and he had sat through the last stormy scenes before the outbreak of the war. He had seen many a hard-fought tussle since, and, unaccustomed though he was to all matters military, he possessed a true soldier's eye. He had noted Rupert's brilliant handling of his troop. He had noted also Rupert's blunders in the field; and, now that he was given men of his own to train, Cromwell turned his observations to a good account. Within a few months he was writing to a friend that he had "a lovely company"; and the day was now at hand when he could put their mettle to the test. In the hot June of 1644 Cromwell

and his East Anglian troop, four thousand strong, were ordered up, with Manchester, to the deliverance of the north.

Marston Moor.—When Manchester, Cromwell, and the East Anglian army joined hands with Fairfax and the Scots near York, it was a noble muster, well over five and twenty thousand strong. No concentration upon so large a scale had hitherto been seen; and it was well for Newcastle, who lay inside York walls, that the Roundheads were as yet poor hands at storming towns. Yet for the moment it was touch and go with him, and very welcome must the news have been that Rupert and his troopers were riding hard to join him from the west. On 1st July the Prince entered the York gates, deftly eluding the Roundheads, who broke

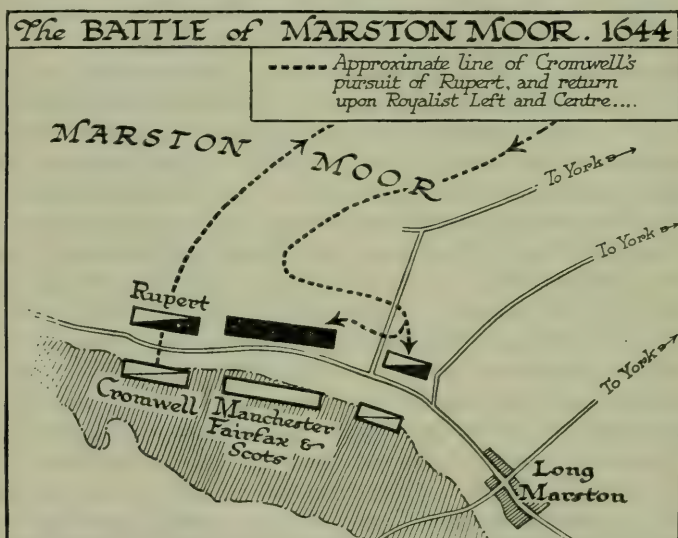


FIG. 26.

off the siege at his approach; and on the morrow, fresh from his ride and impatient of delay, Rupert went out with Newcastle in quest of them. He found them on the edge of a moor above Long Marston, some eight miles from the city. They were well-posted on a hillside among fields of standing corn, and with a shallow ditch running all along their front. The Royalists were now almost their equivalent in numbers; but against such a strong position not even Rupert ventured to deliver an attack. So for a while the two armies sat there idle, watching each other suspiciously across the ditch. The morning wore on into the afternoon. Thunder showers, which had been gathering overhead, broke fitfully upon the field. The Roundhead guns spoke ineffectually from time to time. The sun sloped into the west, and still there was no sign of movement on the hill. By six o'clock the Royalists decided that there would be no fighting for that day. Rupert and his officers dismounted

for their supper. Newcastle retired into his coach to smoke. They heard the Roundheads up among the corn chanting the evening psalm. The singing ceased. There was a lull; then came a discharge of cannon, and in a flash, almost before they knew it, the enemy were down upon them and across the ditch. The Scots, wielding their claymores, took the centre. Fairfax was on the right; and Cromwell, with his East Anglian troopers, came in upon the left, there meeting the picked corps of Rupert's cavaliers. Now, as throughout the war, cavalry was to decide the issue of the day. It was a case of 'Greek meets Greek,' and this time Rupert had found his match. Though checked at the first onset, and himself wounded in the neck, Cromwell was not to be denied. "A miss is as good as a mile," he cried as he renewed the charge; and now the strict training he had given to his yeomanry began to tell. Though shaken, they closed their ranks and stirrup to stirrup pounded on, and presently, hardly believing their eyes, they saw Rupert's invincibles racing before them to the gates of York. And here it was that Cromwell's military genius stood revealed. Instead of allowing his men to scatter wildly in pursuit (the blunder Rupert had committed at Edgehill), he kept them well in hand and, swinging round, turned back to ascertain how the rest of the army fared. His reappearance upon the field came none too soon. The Parliamentary infantry was shattered. Regiments were making off wholesale. The Scots in the centre, though still fighting bravely, were almost overwhelmed, and Fairfax's horse had fled before the Royalist left wing. It was a desperate situation; yet Cromwell seized it at a glance. He swept round upon the rear of the victorious Royalist left, scattered it, and then turned upon the infantry who pressed the Scots. The infantry, too, was crumpled under the charge of his trained troops, and by ten o'clock that evening not a Royalist was left upon the field. "We routed all we charged," Cromwell wrote in a letter to a friend. "I believe of twenty thousand the Prince hath not four thousand left. Give glory, all the glory, to God." So ended the fight of Marston Moor—a signal victory. The north was won at a blow for Parliament. The King's luck and Rupert's prestige were broken. The tide had turned at last, and it was Cromwell's four thousand troopers who had done it.

CHAPTER XI

PARLIAMENT'S VICTORY

Whatever were the failures or difficulties through which Parliament had passed, they still possessed one undeniable advantage. Time was on their side. The war had run three years, and, until Marston Moor, had run in the King's favour; yet now the King was less well-placed than when he started. For one thing, he was running perilously short of funds. For him to raise money by taxation was impossible. The wealthier parts of England were against him; the agricultural districts, where

his cause was strong, had little to give. Plunder perhaps brought in something; and the cavaliers provided what they could from their houses and estates. The timber in their parks was felled; priceless heirlooms of gold and silver plate were sacrificed with prodigal generosity. Tankards and decanters, tureens and chalices, the pride of centuries of English craftsmanship, now went wholesale into the melting-pot. Even the crown jewels had been sent over with the Queen to Holland to be pawned. Yet there is an end to such resources; and, turn where he might, the King's purse was nearly empty; pay in the Royalist ranks was growing scarce. The Parliamentarians, on the other hand, were in no such evil straits. Their strength, as we have so frequently insisted, lay in the seaport towns. Trade flourished, and taxes, freely voted by the House of Commons, were paid—less freely, perhaps, yet still in the long run paid—by the rich manufacturers and merchants. Parliament's resources had by no means reached their end. Given the money and given the men (and here too there was plenty of sound material on which Parliament might draw), the one thing needed to create a first-class army was the ability to organise. Organisation, it is true, had up till now been chiefly noted by its absence. The armies (with one exception) had been ill-trained, ill-disciplined, and frequently ill-led. There had been no true unity of command. But now at last the light was breaking; the lessons of defeat were being laid to heart; and, above all, aptly to the moment the organiser had appeared upon the scene. Cromwell understood his opportunity. He had learnt to know himself and the strength which lay within him; and nothing now could stay him in his course.

Parliament's Reorganisation.—The process of reform, even in time of war, is never smooth; and Cromwell saw that, before things could be set properly to rights, many a hard truth needed to be spoken, many an established reputation marred. Even since the victory at Marston Moor there had been much gross mismanagement. Some of the Parliamentary leaders had been slack; some, rumour said, half-hearted. There was my Lord Essex, who had gone off on a fool's errand into Cornwall and had left his army to surrender at Lostwithiel, while he himself took ship and returned by sea. There was my Lord Manchester, that "sweet, meek man," who had been given a glorious chance of annihilating Charles's force near Newbury, and yet had allowed him to escape, nobody knew why. Plainly it was high time that somebody spoke out; and during the winter of that year Cromwell was more often upon his feet in Parliament than in the saddle with his men. And at last he had his way. On his initiative a Self-Denying Ordinance so-called was imposed upon all members of both Houses. Every military commission and command was thereby to be resigned. A clean sweep was to be made of the "old gang"; and, the inefficient being thus removed, Fairfax was appointed generalissimo, with Cromwell himself as master of the horse and second-in-command. Both men's efficiency was proved up to the hilt, and now for the first time Parliament had leaders worthy of the name.

Nor did the change end there. Such a reconstruction paved the way

for wholesale military reform. Instead of the old disjointed system of local companies, commanded by local captains and pursuing purely local aims, there was to be henceforth a central standing army over twenty thousand strong. It was known as the New Model army; and the original and model on which its lines were laid was Cromwell's own East Anglian troop. That force, when it reached its climax of perfection, was indeed a marvellous instrument. "Europe," said a contemporary, "hath no better soldiers." Every man of them was picked, not for his military efficiency alone, but for his moral character as well. "To own men who are godly and religious" was for Cromwell the secret of success, and the discipline of his troop would have done credit to a convent. "No man swears but he pays his fine of 12d.; if he be drunk, he is set in the stocks, or worse; if one calls the other a Roundhead, he is cashiered." Each man carried in his knapsack a pocket Testament, "containing most, if not all, those passages contained in Holy Scripture which do show the qualifications of the inner man, that is, a fit souldier to fight the Lord's battles, both before he fights, in the fight, and after the fight."

These men went to war for an ideal, in some ways a narrow and bigoted ideal it may be, but strong in the strength of an unalterable conviction. They imagined themselves to be God's instruments for the correction of a sinful world, and they did not mince matters about their opponents' creed. Puritans to the backbone, they hated all who differed from them in religion with a bitter and unrelenting hate. To them Charles was "the man of blood," his followers "the sons of Belial," his cause breathed the spirit of the Antichrist! On all that smacked of Popish ceremony or superstition they declared a ruthless war. Images and painted windows, which a century before had escaped the hand of the original reformers, now fell victims to the fury of their zeal. At times there were wild doings; and, if tradition speaks the truth, these men would take the bones of dead saints out of the coffins and fling them through the shattered panes of glass; then, chanting a psalm by way of evensong, they would tether their horses up against the pillars and make their bivouac in a cathedral nave. Over questions of Church government they were quite frankly opposed to any form of ritual or control whatever. Independents was the name they went by, and Independents was exactly what they were. Free themselves, they wished to see that everybody else was free; for they believed that religion was purely a matter between the individual and his God, and that everyone should be left to worship as he chose. The result was that they were just as intolerant of uniformity as Churchmen were intolerant of dissent. All rules and regulations they utterly abhorred; systems, and above all the Presbyterian system, appeared to them as tyrannical as Popery, or worse. The idea of setting in England a synod and all that it implied was to them like red rags to a bull. Such, then, was the strange, fierce creed of Cromwell's Ironsides, a peculiar mixture of freedom and intolerance, not perhaps a pattern of true Christian charity and patience, but, for all that, strong, genuine, and deep. At least it made fine soldiers; and,

as time went on, the standard that the Ironsides set was followed by the bulk of the New Model army. They were leaven to the lump, and they inspired the rest not merely with their keen religious ardour, but with something too of their military skill. Before long the Parliament's new standing army was to the old undisciplined contingents as professionals to volunteers. They adopted a uniform of scarlet shirts. They were well-drilled, well-officered, and regularly paid. By the summer of '45 they would be ready; and there was little chance remaining for King Charles when the New Model should take the field.

Montrose and Naseby.—Marston Moor had won the north for Parliament; but, when the next campaigning season opened, the midlands and the south-west were still the King's. New hope had dawned for him too beyond the Scottish border, where that sturdy loyalist, the Marquis of Montrose, had raised an army to support him and to fight the Presbyterians of the Covenant, who were now the English Parliament's allies. Lured by this vague hope, Charles moved from Oxford with a force ten thousand strong and took the northern road. After him went Fairfax and the New Model army. Cromwell himself joined them on the march, and the men cheered to the echo when the great captain rode into the camp. They were in the mood for victory, and not without reason. When Charles turned to meet them near the town of Naseby, they outnumbered him by two to one. Even so there was stern fighting on that 14th of June. The main trend of the battle is not difficult to grasp. To all intents and purposes it was Marston Moor over again, but with a single difference. At Naseby, Rupert and Cromwell were not immediately confronted. They led on different wings, and in either case the right. Each was successful during the first flush of the engagement in routing the cavalry opposed to him. Each then behaved as we have learnt already to expect he would. Rupert's troop went helter-skelter off the field in pursuit of fugitives. Cromwell's troop reined in, returned upon the scene of the main action, and there restored the balance of the day. It scattered the Royalist foot, and then, as Rupert's victorious troop came cantering back, formed line afresh and faced about. It was now all up with Charles, and the man himself must have known it as he rode to join Rupert's horse. Yet physical courage at a crisis was one of Charles's best qualities, and he sent the men with a cheer to the attack. "One charge more, gentlemen, and the day is ours." Within an hour his last regiment was broken; his army, as an army, had ceased to exist; and he was himself a fugitive. For several months he wandered aimlessly upon the Welsh border. What little hope he reposed upon Montrose's Scotch adventure vanished with early autumn, when the Marquis was caught and overwhelmed by his own countrymen at Philiphaugh.

Meanwhile Parliament was busy recovering England. Following the north and the midlands, the south-west was taken from the King. Only here and there did scattered bands of Royalists hold out; and the Round-head leaders set to work with systematic strategy to reduce the strongholds

that remained. A little battering by siege artillery was usually sufficient to reduce the towns. Some fortified castles, such as Basing House, needed to be carried by regular assault, and there was bloody fighting at the breach. But for the most part the Cavaliers were tired of war, and even Rupert himself was counselling surrender. In the spring of '46 Charles, now a pitiful figure with long locks shorn and altered beard, appeared before the Scottish camp near Nottingham; and there, not so far from the spot where four years earlier he had first raised his standard with very different hopes, he threw himself upon the mercy of his countrymen. The Scots, however, did not want this awkward prisoner. Finding he was not prepared to support the Presbyterian Kirk, their one thought was to end the whole tedious business and get home again. So after some months' bargaining they sold the King for £400,000 into the hands of Parliament. With characteristic caution they weighed every guinea-piece before they struck camp for the north; and when they departed the King was left in close custody at Holmby House in Northamptonshire.

Split Between Army and Politicians.—Charles then was beaten and a prisoner. But what would or should follow next, none knew. We indeed can see all clearly; but to the men of that day the future was still dark. A Republic was hardly as yet dreamt of; there was no serious intention of deposing, much less of executing, Charles. The idea was to give him back the crown, but shorn of its real power, hedged in and limited by Parliament's authority, and robbed of all control over the military forces of the land. Those were the terms, the victors' terms to a humbled and beaten King. Over one burning question, however, even the victors themselves were not agreed; and there now occurred within their ranks a most disastrous split. After all that has gone before, it is perhaps unnecessary to say that the split was about religion. There were two main parties, which held views diametrically opposed. A year or two before, as we have seen, Parliament had pledged itself, on Pym's advice, to accept the Presbyterian Kirk for England. It was the price of Scottish aid at the crisis of the war; and the Scots now pressed for the fulfilment of the pledge. The majority of Parliament accordingly was for Presbyterianism—Presbyterianism in its full rigour, leaving no loophole for free consciences and imposing the strictest penalties on all dissent. They were ready, strange as it may seem, to substitute for the tyranny of bishops a tyranny of synods, which might have proved infinitely worse.

But there was another set of men who did not sit in Parliament and who had not been consulted on this point. The army, as we have said, were Independents almost to a man. They stood for free consciences and toleration all round; and they hated the Presbyterian tyranny almost as much as they hated that of Rome. When these men, therefore, saw Parliament preparing to reinstate the King, together with a Presbyterian Church, they naturally grew restive and suspicious. When, further, Parliament announced its intention of disbanding them unpaid, their

anger knew no bounds. They had not fought and conquered at Marston Moor and Naseby now to sit idly by and watch a handful of mere politicians turning to such selfish uses the fruits of their success. They had not risked their lives and fortunes in the cause of liberty, now to be bullied for their religious views and maybe put in prison or the pillory for dissenting from a Presbyterian Church. If such were the bargain that Parliament meant to drive with their puppet prisoner King, then the sooner he was taken off their hands the better. The soldiers, in short, resolved upon a coup. Charles was at Holmby House. In June of '47 an emissary from the camp, named Cornet Joyee, rode up with a squadron of troopers to the gates. The King was told peremptorily to follow them. "On whose authority?" he asked. Joyee pointed to his troopers. Charles had no choice. He went. But, as he went, something more than the royal personage was changing hands. From that moment the real power of government passed away from Parliament, and England found herself taking her orders from the camp. A few weeks later the army marched upon the capital and took up its quarters in Hyde Park. The success of the coup was complete; and the Independents had won.

When soldiers venture to flout the constitutional authority and to take the law into their own hands, it bodes ill for a just or peaceful settlement. Happily, however, there was at the head of the army a man who was something more than a soldier. Cromwell looked upon the crisis with a statesman's eye. He saw the meaning of the army's coup; he saw its dangers; and if he sided with them in their violent seizure of the King, it was because he sympathised in their ideals. Cromwell's was no personal ambition: he never desired power for its own sake. Religion was at bottom the ruling motive of his life. As a young man he had experienced a sudden divine call to abandon the world's frivolities and devote his life to God. Thenceforward he had grown solemn and devout; and through the long years of war and stress which followed, he met each perplexing problem and made each hard decision in prayer upon his knees. Yet, just because conscience meant so much to him, he equally respected the consciences of others. An Independent of the Independents, he desired that all should be free to worship as they chose; and, now that their Presbyterian folly had shown Parliament to be the enemy of freedom, Cromwell ceased to regard them seriously and made up his mind that the army was God's chosen instrument for establishing righteousness on earth. When it came to the point, the army was not to prove so reasonable or so tolerant as Cromwell would have wished; and often he was forced to sacrifice a part of his own ideals to their more headstrong ways. Nevertheless his strength of character made him the one man capable of steering England through the storm; and if from this time on the ship was now committed to the soldiers' keeping, his was the arm which still held the wavering helm.

Charles's Escape and Second Civil War.—Left to himself, Cromwell would certainly have arrived at some practicable arrangement with the

King. In his dealings with Charles he was generous to a fault; and we cannot doubt but he was right in thinking that the nation as a whole was ready to receive Charles back. Two things, however, wrecked his schemes and made his generosity of no avail. The first stumbling-block was the opposition of the army. The second and even more serious stumbling-block was the King's incapacity to play square. Charles's peculiar conscience forbade him to accept the proffered terms, or to make any real surrender of his monarchical claims. But his conscience simultaneously allowed him to tell the most extraordinary lies. With his lips he was constantly pretending to fall in with whatever Cromwell asked, but in his heart undoubtedly intended to do nothing of the sort. He gave promises, then took them back again. He protested on his honour that he meant the country well, and meanwhile he kept up a treacherous correspondence with the Queen. Finally, by dint of secret and underhand intrigues, he provoked a criminal and futile reopening of the war. Not unnaturally, perhaps, it was in Scotland that he found most fruitful promise of support.

He was, after all, a Scot himself, and the tie of blood is strong. Many Scottish nobles were, like Montrose, staunch loyalists at heart, and there were many others who, as Presbyterians, were angry at England's long delay in making good her pledge. Assured that both these parties would rally to his side, Charles at length threw off the mask. Issuing a cry for help, he escaped in the autumn of '47 from his prison at Hampton Court and fled to the Isle of Wight; was there caught and held in custody by the governor of Carisbrooke; tried to escape by a window, but was ignominiously detected wedged half in, half out. Meanwhile, however, his cry for help had been answered. Many of his old partisans took arms in England; and with the spring of '48 a motley host of Scottish malecontents poured down over the border. But Cromwell and the army were also on the march. They caught the Scots at Preston, and hunted them for three days through pouring rain. It was more of a rout than a battle; and few of the Scots got home. The 'Second Civil War,' as it is called, was over almost as swiftly as it had begun.

The victory at Preston cleared instantaneously the surcharged air. In the first place it decided once and for all the issue between the politicians and the soldiers; and decided it in favour of the latter. The Presbyterian party was discredited; and the army, having once again proved the country's saviour on the battlefield, seemed now to have made good its title to supersede the authority of Parliament and to take the control of affairs into its hands. Men of war have a short way with them; and the soldiers' method of bringing Parliament to heel was neither constitutional nor polite. One morning in December the members, coming down to the House at Westminster, found a detachment of soldiers under the command of Colonel Pride stationed before the doors. What followed is well known. All who were reputed to have Presbyterian leanings or to have opposed the policy of the military

leaders were unceremoniously turned away. Some were arrested. Only a miserable remnant—some fifty or sixty members who could be trusted to keep a quiet tongue in their heads—survived ‘Pride’s Purge’ and were graciously permitted to retain their seats. This remnant, known by the undignified title of the ‘Rump,’ was all that now remained of that famous assembly the Long Parliament, which had sat throughout the war. Such was the violent use which the victors of Preston made of their triumph. They had silenced opposition by suppressing it; and, seeing their way thus cleared of every obstacle, they turned to settle their account with Charles himself.

The crowning proof the man’s incurable duplicity was ready to their hand. Under the cover of honourable negotiations he had struck them a coward’s blow in the back; and this was more than the soldiers could forgive. Already some months before the army leaders had held a prayer meeting at Windsor, Cromwell amongst the rest; and with a full sense of their grave responsibility they had arrived at a terrible decision—“to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for the blood that he had shed.” The time for generosity had indeed gone by; and though Cromwell himself was still for mercy, and strove even at this late hour to give the King his life, he no longer had the power. Feeling in the army was too strong for compromise; and Cromwell had here to choose between the men who had fought with him, and Charles, nor, argue as he might, could the stern logic of necessity be answered. It was clear as day that so long as Charles was living England could have no peace. Set conditionally upon the throne, it was sure as day that he would break his word as soon as ever opportunity arose. Kept a prisoner, he would remain a permanent centre of intrigue. Exiled, he would be for ever plotting to return. There remained but one solution. “We will cut off his head,” said Cromwell at last, “his head with the crown upon it.”

Trial of Charles.—On 21st January, 1649, Charles was brought up for trial in Westminster Hall. Scarlet-draped benches for 135 judges were arranged across the end, where in the centre sat Sergeant Bradshaw, President of the Court, robed also in scarlet and wearing a shot-proof cap. Before him the prisoner, a solitary figure, sat in a high-backed chair. The space behind the chair, and the galleries which ran along the wall on either side, were thronged with members of the public, women as well as men. Halberdiers stood to arms along the gangways and at the doors. Such was the setting of the Grand Assize; but open and ceremonious as the trial was, it proved virtually a farce. Charles, who was never so fine or so fearless as when he had his back against the wall, refused point-blank to make any relevant defence. He denied the right of this or any other court to try him. He obstinately harped upon his old belief in the divine authority of kings. “A subject and a sovereign are clear different things,” he said; he was answerable for anything that he had done to God, and God alone. So thought Charles; but to his judges, on the other hand, he had already ceased to be a king. He

was addressed as plain Charles Stuart. He was rebuked for keeping his hat upon his head. Even his servants were forbidden to kneel to him or show him any token of respect. Yet Englishmen are by instinct the most loyal and conservative of men, and there were deep misgivings under all this show. Of the 135 judges appointed to try the case barely a third were present on the opening day. When the time came to sign the death-warrant only 59 had the courage to append their names; and on the document, which still exists, many signatures have been scratched out. The fact is that the whole affair was desperately unpopular with the mass of the country. Yet Cromwell and others were now pledged to it: and they would not draw back. On the 30th of January Charles was taken from his place of custody at Westminster and led across St. James's Park to the Banqueting House at Whitehall, where the scaffold had been prepared. The air was cold; and fearful lest even a shiver should cast doubts upon his pluck, Charles had donned an extra shirt. Crossing the Park, he walked so fast that the guards could scarcely keep pace. The scaffold, draped in black, had been built to the level of the first floor windows, and Charles issued upon it by an opening made through the sash. According to the license customary upon such occasions he delivered a short speech; but the words reached very few of the vast crowd which stood below. This over, the bishop who attended him spoke by way of consolation concerning the long journey he was about to take. "I go," answered Charles, "from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where there can be no disturbance." There was no shaking this man's faith, and, whether false or true, the ideals on which his whole life had been based he cherished to the end. He believed he had done his duty upon earth and his reward was secure. After this he began to disrobe, and delivering his cloak and the order of the George into the bishop's hands, he said, "Remember." This was his last word. His neck was severed at one blow; and as the executioner displayed the head, "there arose," so one eye-witness declares, "such a groan as I have never heard before and desire I may never hear again. . . ." Within a few days there was published in London a book purporting to be written by the King's own hand. It was called the "Eikon Basiliké, or the Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings." It went through fifty editions in a twelvemonth, and the copies, purchased eagerly by thousands, were treated and regarded almost as a sacred document. "Charles the Martyr" had called forth emotions which had never warmed to Charles the King; and by that dignified surrender of his life he unwittingly preserved the monarchy for England. A small group of soldiers and politicians, with Oliver Cromwell at their head, held for the moment the shadow of political authority; but from this time onwards Prince Charles, his father's eldest son, had begun to reign already in the people's hearts. The Restoration was a certainty which waited only upon time.

CHAPTER XII

CROMWELL IN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND

Cromwell in Ireland.—With Charles's death the Revolution was complete; yet Cromwell could not even now afford to lay the sword aside. The enemies of revolutionary England were springing up around her. Abroad the courts of Europe refused to recognise the new régime. Her ambassadors were murdered, her merchant vessels robbed; and nearer home the banner of the young Prince Charles was soon openly upraised. The Irish Catholics, utterly out of hand since the rising and massacre of '41, had declared for him and were harbouring Rupert and a Royalist fleet; while the Scots were ready to lend assistance to his cause, provided he on his part was ready to accept their terms. The times were critical indeed; and England herself seemed likely enough to founder in the storm. The State's existence hung during those months upon the constancy of a single man; but Cromwell was nerved for swift and irrevocable decisions, and when he struck, he did not strike in vain. In the summer of '49 the London merchants were wagering odds of twenty against one that he would not dare to leave England and cross the Irish Sea. In August he had landed his force in Dublin Bay.

Ireland was all to pieces, and stern treatment seemed the only possible course; but Cromwell was more than stern. For once in his life he was abominably cruel; and the truth is that, apart from the crisis which hung over him, his soul was filled with the passion of a blinding hate. He remembered, and his soldiers remembered also, the hideous barbarities done by Irish natives upon English settlers in the year of '41; and as barbarians unworthy of clemency or Christian treatment he now regarded them. A lust for blood-thirsty revenge and a spirit of bitter animosity against the Catholics banished from this campaign the moderation which had so far marked the conduct of the Civil War. Quarter was seldom given; and even non-combatants, more especially if they were priests, fell victims to the English fury. Cromwell first marched northward against Drogheda on the Boyne. He took the town by storm after terrible fighting at the breach. Part of the garrison fled into a church. The church was set on fire. The other fugitives were hunted down, and for two days and two nights the massacre went on. "That night," says Cromwell himself, "we put to the sword about two thousand men. . . . Their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously. . . . I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town." It is probable that without the general's knowledge women and children were slaughtered with the rest. "A marvellous great mercy" was the comment of this extraordinary man. But the blow had its effect. Fort after fort yielded, and within two weeks all the country north of Dub-

lin was secure. Then Cromwell turned south to Wexford. Here, after a fight, the captain surrendered up the castle; but, whether provoked or no, the same hideous scene of massacre ensued. Henceforward the fighting was less severe; and by next spring Cromwell had mastered all the island except the extreme west, where Limerick and other towns held out.

Urgent needs elsewhere were calling him, and, leaving the completion of the task to General Ireton, his own son-in-law, Cromwell turned to deal with the rebellious Scots. How deep was the mark left on the Irish spirit by the awful tragedy of this revenge it is needless to explain; but when Irishmen speak bitterly of "Cromwell's curse" it is rather of his after-measures that they think. Cromwell inherited a bad tradition. Both Elizabeth and James had ousted native peasants and planted English settlers in their place. His policy was slightly different. Instead of herding the peasants away into remoter districts, where naturally enough they did little but meditate revenge, he left them indeed upon the soil; but over their heads he set, in the place of the Irish landowners, whom he now dispossessed, Englishmen drawn from his own veteran army or elsewhere. For a time at any rate this "foreign garrison" served its purpose well. It made rebellion on such a scale as '41 next to impossible. Scarcely a third of the island now remained in Irish hands. Cowed and crushed under their heavy sentence, deprived of religious freedom, robbed of the national leadership of their nobility, the unhappy folk grew passive and sank into despair. But, hate him as they might, Cromwell's policy had done its work. Order was restored; law reigned; justice was done. He had set Ireland firmly under the English heel. That is one solution of the eternal problem; and through two centuries and more the policy of Cromwell has continued more or less unchanged. Yet the problem still remains: so does the hate.

While Cromwell was busy reducing Irishmen to order, the young Prince Charles's cause, which had failed so dismally across the Channel, was quickly gathering strength among the Scots. With curious inconsistency the men who had done so much to encompass the first ruin of the Stuarts were now and henceforward to be the chief prop and mainstay of that unlucky house. The obstinate fidelity with which many of them clung to it for the next hundred years may seem at first sight difficult to explain. Partly, no doubt, they felt some native pride in a family which bore Scots blood and wore the tartan. Partly, too, the romance of its misfortunes and adventures appealed to a nation whose sympathy has always gone out freely to a forlorn and failing cause. These motives were strong, at any rate among the wild Highlanders of the north, where in the following century the Jacobite rebellions of '15 and '45 were to arise, and where at this very moment the undaunted Marquis of Montrose was once more rallying the clansmen round the Royalist flag. To the more stolid natures of the Lowlanders, however, such generous enthusiasms made less appeal. With them it was the Covenant or nothing; and, whether they fought for Parliament or

Stuarts, the fundamental motive of their shifting policy remained invariably the same—it was the hope of bringing England under the Presbyterian Kirk. With Montrose and his Highlanders, who were against the Covenant, these Presbyterians of the south would have nothing to do; they hunted the gallant Marquis down, caught him, condemned him spitefully to death, and strung him up at Edinburgh “in his red scarlet cloak.” This done, they turned to make their own conditions with the Prince; and the man who as Charles II was to prove the wildest monarch who ever sat upon the throne was ready to meet them here. The scruples which had troubled Charles the father were altogether absent from the mind of Charles the son. He fell in with the Scots’ wishes, signed the Covenant, promised to set up the Presbyterian Kirk in England, not because he liked it or believed in it, but simply because it paid. Had it appeared more politic, he would probably have turned into a good Mahomedan with equal zeal. The Scots, however, did not know their man; and they were delighted with the prospects he held out. So for the third time in half a dozen years they prepared to march into England for the Presbyterian cause. The Prince arrived in Scotland as their leader. The war-cry was raised: the men poured in; and David Leslie, the general who had fought at Marston Moor, had soon some thirty thousand under his command. It was time, and high time too, for Cromwell to leave Ireland and turn to meet this menace from the north; nor did he linger long upon the road. May of 1650 saw him back again in London; before July was out he had marched the length of England and crossed the Lowland border.

Battle of Dunbar.—It was not in the same fierce spirit of his Irish mission that Cromwell moved against the Scots. His enemies here were honest Protestants at least, not Catholic barbarians; and he would far sooner have won them by persuasion than by any victory upon the field. He discovered, too, that the real power in the Scottish camp lay not so much with the Prince or with the general as with the all-powerful ministers of the Presbyterian Kirk; and he determined, before the campaign was properly begun, to try the force of argument upon these godly folk. The diplomatic duel which ensued is perhaps the most astonishing in history. Both sides issued fervid denunciations of the other’s religious views; and both sides quoted Scripture to support their own. Cromwell begged the ministers to read Isaiah xxviii. from the fifth to the fifteenth verse; but, needless to say, it was without effect. They remained quite unconvinced; and the Lord General then turned to the sterner arbitrament of war. Here, however, he succeeded little better. Try as he might, he could not make Leslie come to blows. His own provisions failed him. His troops fell sick; and the beginning of September saw him falling back sullenly along the road which skirts the eastern coast towards Berwick and the Border. Then Leslie moved; and by a lightning stroke swept round to the south of Cromwell, seized the heights above Dunbar, and, sitting astride the road, blocked the one path to England. Cromwell was caught, his forces outnumbered by

fully two to one, his communications cut except by sea. "We cannot get through," he wrote, "without a miracle." Yet he was saved, not by a miracle indeed, but by his opponents' incredible stupidity in leaving their post of advantage in the hills and descending to fight it out upon the plain. The blunder was not Leslie's; seeing the enemy trapped, that tried commander was for staying where he was, but at this point the meddlesome Kirk ministers must needs put in their oar. Impatient to smite the English hip and thigh, they overruled his wise decision; and on the afternoon of the 2nd of September Cromwell saw the Scots descending to the plain. A fair pitched battle in the open field was all he asked of fate. "The Lord hath delivered them into our hands," he said, and made his preparations for the morrow. . . . By the uncertain moonlight before dawn the English advanced to the attack. The

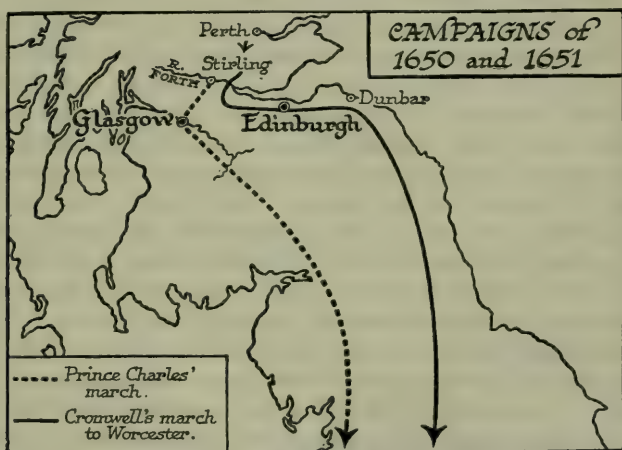


FIG. 27.

field was soaking from the downpour of the night; and a burn which ran before the Scottish front hampered the free movement of both armies. But Cromwell's troopers were invincible. They drove in Leslie's right while the artillery was pounding at the rest; and then in quick succession they rolled up every regiment in turn. As the morning sun appeared above the mist it broke upon a scene of utter rout. "Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered," shouted Cromwell to his men; and then and there, before pressing the pursuit, he called a halt, while his troopers, sitting still upon their horses, chanted as their hymn of thanksgiving the 117th Psalm.

Battle of Worcester.—Never was an escape more wonderful nor a victory more crushing than Dunbar. The remnants of Leslie's army did not rally, and Edinburgh was next day in English hands. Yet the rebellion was not over. The Presbyterians and their rivals the Royalist Scots nobles were now making common cause; and beyond the Forth the Prince was gathering another army. All that winter and well into

next summer Cromwell's efforts were in vain. He could make no impression on the Prince's stronghold upon Stirling rock. And after midsummer he took a step which must have seemed even to him a desperate risk. Striking north-eastwards, he pushed past the Prince's army into Perth, leaving the road to England open and unguarded in his rear. If this was a trap to tempt the Prince out of his fastness, the stratagem succeeded; for the Prince fell headlong into it. He was out of Stirling in a twinkling, racing down the western route to England, and bidding fair, with three days' start at the outset, to arrive in London first. Cromwell, however, was not far behind; and the two armies hurried south upon roughly parallel lines. Down the road through Lancashire and Cheshire went the Prince; and some fifty miles to eastwards, through Yorkshire and the Midlands, followed Cromwell, three days' marching to the bad, but close enough to keep his quarry headed off to west. Pausing at Worcester, the Prince at length turned at bay and the pursuit closed in. On the 3rd of September, one year to a day from the battle of Dunbar, Cromwell took the field for the last time. The Scots were in a strong and fortified position, protected by a river on two fronts. But the odds were dead against them: not a finger had been raised for their support in England; and they were now outnumbered by nearly three to one. Confident in the omen of his "lucky day," the English general transferred his troops by a boat-bridge across the river; and then, foot by foot and from hedge to hedge, drove back the stubborn Highlanders on Worcester's walls. There were perilous moments in the changing fortunes of that afternoon; but, as the twilight fell, the city gates were carried and the fight was running through the darkened streets. Scarcely a Scot escaped; 10,000 were made prisoner; 3000 fell to the sword. It is said that the victorious army lost two hundred men. "The dimensions of this victory are above my thoughts," wrote Cromwell to the Speaker. "It is, for aught I know, a crowning mercy." He was right. The civil war was over. At Naseby, and then again at Preston, he had brought to a successful end two bouts in the long struggle; this outbreak was the third; but with Worcester's "crowning mercy" the Royalist cause went down—only to rise again when Cromwell himself was dead.

As the scattered remnants of what had been the Prince's army were hurrying home along the northern roads, they ran upon the Prince himself fleeing like the rest. They urged him to accompany them back to Scotland; but he refused the risk, and turned across country to escape as best he could. With an honest country fellow as his only guide, he made his way from one to other of his Catholic friends, sleeping at times in ditches, living chiefly on bread and beer, and moving frequently by night. To avoid all chance of recognition, he had his long curls cut and his hands stained dark. He wore a suit of most disreputable clothes, to wit, "a very greasy, old, grey steeple-crowned hat, with the brim turned up, without lining or hat-band, the sweat appearing two inches deep through it round the band-place; a green cloth jump-coat, thread-

bare, even to the threads being worn white, and breeches of the same, with long knees down to the garter; with an old, sweaty, leathern doublet, a pair of white flannel stockings next to his legs, which were his foot stockings, their tops being cut off to prevent their being discovered, and upon them a pair of old green yarn stockings, all worn and darned at the knees, with their feet cut off; his shoes were old, all slashed for the ease of his feet and full of gravel, with little rolls of paper between the toes to keep them from galling." Thus attired he ran the gauntlet down the west of England, wading rivers to his waist, sitting in an oak near Boscobel, while Cromwell's troopers were searching for him in the wood below, mixing in taverns more than once with men who, had they known it, would have handed him up upon the spot (for there was now a price upon his head). One fellow gave him in casual conversation an exact description of the "wanted" man, and then, eyeing him up and down, declared that he was shorter than the King by at least three fingers' breadth. The ostler at a seaport recognised his face, and was only put off by some cock-and-bull story and a drink. At last, after these and many other wild adventures, Charles reached Brighton, and, procuring a fishing-boat hard by at Shoreham, made good his escape across the Channel. There, first in France and finally in Holland, he found a shelter until the tide of events should turn.

Cromwell Dictator.—During his mad rush through England Charles had ostentatiously proclaimed himself as King. The appeal had fallen on deaf ears; and, indeed, nothing is more remarkable than the indifference now shown by the self-same people who nine years later were to welcome back the exile with relief and joy. During the interval they learnt by experience to know their true desires; but for the moment every thought and hope was centred upon Cromwell. As the victorious general returned from Worcester to the capital, he was hailed with wild enthusiasm all along the road. The Lord Mayor and Corporation came out in carriages to meet him. Crowds cheered and cannons boomed. The Rump voted him the nation's grateful thanks and a handsome salary for life. Hampton Court was made over to him for a residence; and little by little he began to assume a semi-royal pomp. The fact is that from this time onwards till his death, just seven years later, Cromwell was king in all but name. That he held no actual title, until in '55 he was proclaimed Protector, is of no great consequence; for though his dictatorship was unofficial, and though the government was still being conducted by a committee of soldier politicians known as the Council of State, yet Cromwell's voice was in everything supreme. Whether he welcomed the power thus thrust upon him is quite another matter. He once himself declared that he would gladly "have lived under his woodland and kept his flock of sheep rather than undertake such a government as this." But he felt like another great Englishman of later days—that he alone could save the country and nobody else could. Everything certainly conspired to make him indispensable. All the big men were gone. Fairfax, disapproving of the expedition into Scotland, had

retired to his country seat, where he spent his time writing indifferent verse. Pym had been dead some years. Hampden had fallen in battle; and Cromwell stood alone, a giant among the dwarfs. The air was full of strange theories and wild dreams. There were rabid Socialists and quixotic Quakers; "Levellers" who wished to root out all differences of class or property and to reduce all mankind to a dead level; Fifth Monarchy Men who believed that the rule of God on earth, obscurely predicted by the prophet Daniel, was now on the point of coming true. Amid all these fanatics and cranks, small-minded agitators and selfish politicians, Cromwell stood like a rock—practical, clear-sighted, sane, the one man who had been able to save England from the abyss, and the one man able now to guide her course aright.

Cromwell's Character.—The career of Cromwell is a study at once fascinating and perplexing. There is something unspeakably impressive about the bigness of his character; and he is the one out of all Englishmen whom Carlyle selected as his ideal man of action. This is the portrait that Carlyle has drawn of him: "Fifty-four years, gone April last; ruddy-fair complexion, bronzed by toil and age; light brown hair and moustache are getting streaked with grey. . . . Massive stature, big massive head, of somewhat leonine aspect; wart above the right eyebrow; nose of considerable blunt aquiline proportions; strict yet copious lips, full of all tremulous sensibilities, and also, if need be, of all fierceness and rigours; deep, loving eyes, call them grave, call them stern, looking from under those craggy brows as if in lifelong sorrow, and yet not thinking it sorrow, thinking it only labour and endeavour; on the whole, a right noble lion-face and hero-face; and to me royal enough." All that is true alike of the face and of the man. Yet, strange to say, there is no character in English history who has aroused more violent hatred or against whom the charge of inconsistency has been more often levelled. It is beyond denial that many of his actions belied the very ideals for which he stood; and we shall find him in his last years overthrowing and suppressing the institution of free Parliament which he himself had fought so long to save, just as we have found him at Drogheda and Wexford breaking the first law of the very Book which was so often in his hands and on his lips. In part, perhaps, the explanation lies in this—that Cromwell's character was not a simple one. In it were contained two very different and at times conflicting strains.

Like all the strong men of history, he possessed to a very high degree that mysterious power of will which bears down all opposition, overrides all obstacles, and, whatever be its object, gets it way. Cromwell could be as masterful as the Conqueror; he could be as obstinate as Henry VIII; he might, had he been so minded, have been another Strafford. Yet here is the strange contrast. As a democratic leader Cromwell did not honestly believe in force. He held reason to be a stronger power than will. He preferred to persuade rather than to compel; and, as he moved forward along novel ways and to new policies, it was his constant effort to carry other folk along with him, not

by the violent assertion of authority, not by the exercise of arbitrary command, but by argument, by explanation, by an appeal to their own consciences and hearts. Towards Parliament, despite their petty insults and small-minded opposition, he showed himself on the whole wonderfully patient, curbing his natural and at times almost ungovernable passion, reasoning, pleading and entreating, rarely attempting to threaten or cajole. Even his soldiers he always treated as reasonable beings. See him at Burford, where a mutiny had broken out among his troops, content to punish three out of nine hundred, then ordering the rest into the parish church, where he mounted the pulpit and preached them a long sermon on the folly of their ways, till his congregation showed their penitence by sobs and groans. Never surely have mutineers been treated so. But that was Cromwell's way; and yet, as time went on, he was doomed to disappointment. He found his fellow-men less reasonable than he had thought; he found that they could not always be persuaded to agree with him; and so strong in him was the conviction of what his conscience told him to be right, that when they disagreed he frequently fell back upon the remedy of force. The truth is that over and over again the masterful side of Cromwell's character triumphed above the other; and its triumph was at once the secret of his success and of his failures. He succeeded as a soldier because at those supreme moments when the will to act is everything, and the responsibility of acting cannot be shared with other men, he may be said never to have faltered. He failed, if fail he did, as a politician, because he began by thinking men to be better than they really were, and ended by thinking them far worse. He never understood that all men, and Englishmen especially, must work out their own salvation, and that to reform the world is a task of larger compass than falls within the life-work of a single man.

CHAPTER XIII

CROMWELL AS PROTECTOR

With Worcester, Cromwell's own campaigning days were over. He never again set eyes upon a battlefield or led his troopers to a charge. But in the business of directing foreign warfare, by sea too rather than by land, he had still great work to do; and it is to these military successes we will turn before we come to deal with his more difficult task of governing England, performed on the whole with more dubious success. How England stood when Cromwell first rose to power we have already hinted. Never, perhaps, in history had her prestige abroad sunk lower. The days of her Elizabethan glory were now but an outworn memory, a tale for grandfathers; and during the first half of the century she had steadily lost ground. From the triumph of the Armada to the miserable fiasco of Rochelle had been a steep decline. But even

mockery is less-galling than contempt; and when England proceeded to attack her lawful King and finally to kill him, then indeed she lost all credit in the eyes of Europe. Like France of the Revolution, she was regarded as a pariah and an outcast by all decent governments. It was Cromwell's honourable task to restore this fallen credit. During the short years of his dictatorship England rose again to her full stature. She laid claim once more to her former proud position as mistress of the ocean, and she obtained at this time perhaps her first clear and conscious vision of what is meant by a Greater Britain beyond seas.

War Against Rupert's Fleet.—Cromwell, already a man past middle age when fate called him to the fore, was naturally quite unversed in foreign politics. But his breadth of outlook widened with events, and he soon came to recognise the rôle which his country might play on the world-stage. There are three distinct phases in the development of the Commonwealth's policy and the recovery of its lost prestige, and the first of these was the tiresome but necessary business of chasing Prince Rupert off the seas. That dashing cavalry captain, when he took to this new element, proved an equally audacious privateer. When Ireland failed him, he fell back on other bases in Scilly and the Channel Isles, from which he preyed disastrously on Parliamentary shipping. The Dutch assisted him; and later he found among the Portuguese a welcome harbour for his fleet. Meantime, however, the English Government had not been idle: and Admiral Blake, their most reliable commander, was soon on Rupert's tracks. After sweeping the Channel, he hunted the Prince round Spain and past Gibraltar, and finally ran him down in far-off Mediterranean waters, where he captured all his ships. This was not, indeed, the last to be heard of Rupert; for he himself escaped, and, collecting other vessels, made off to the West Indies, there to prey on English trade. But the Government's effort had achieved its immediate object; and the effort in itself had an important consequence. It improved the English fleet beyond all recognition. Sailors had been trained; admirals had gained experience; and, above all, between forty and fifty new vessels had been built. In this first phase of the Commonwealth's sea-warfare the capital result was the forging of this new weapon. In the phase which was to follow there came the opportunity of using it to still greater national advantage.

War on the Dutch.—That second phase was the Dutch war. The insignificant States of the Low Countries, which were engaged, when last we saw them, in an unequal struggle against the Catholic tyranny of Spain, had at last won their independence in 1609. Once free, they had forged ahead, and in barely fifty years had turned to excellent use the great natural advantages with which their river-mouth ports and land-locked seas endowed them. While England slept, or was busied with domestic quarrels, the Dutch had got into their hands the main carrying trade of the world. Their merchantmen plied the seas literally by thousands, voyaging from port to port in Europe, India, and America; and their people grew rich and prosperous on the proceeds of this traffic.

Now the English Parliament, which fought the Civil War, was, as we have said, in a great measure representative of the commercial and money-making class; nor were they so wrapt up in matters religious and political as to forget entirely the all-important element of trade. They viewed Dutch progress with genuine alarm, and in 1551 the members of the Rump performed the one good service that we know of them. They passed the celebrated Navigation Act, which struck a mortal blow at the Dutch monopoly of sea-borne traffic. The Act required that for the future all goods or produce imported into England must be carried either on English ships or on the ships belonging to the country from which the produce hailed. This meant that the Dutch, who themselves produced but little, would henceforth be practically excluded from the important harbours of England and her colonies.¹ The Act was bitterly resented, and so the quarrel began; but, not content with this, the English added insult to the injury by demanding that Dutch ships should submit to search at sea, and should further make it their practice to salute the English flag. The demand being refused, war followed, and for two years the Dutch and English fleets contested the mastery of the Channel.

It was an up-and-down struggle. English captains, who were often little better than converted landsmen, were at first no match for the Dutch admirals. The merchantmen now pressed into the naval service were for the most part sorry fighters; and in one celebrated battle, in which Blake met Van Tromp, the Dutchman, off Dungeness, they actually turned tail and ran away. Van Tromp is said to have celebrated his triumph by hoisting a broom to his mast-head to signify that he had "swept the seas." Blake retorted, so at least the story goes, by running up a whip, the point of which boast he certainly made good by thrashing Van Tromp soundly the next year. The war, however, was not decided by these collisions of the fleets, but by the less glorious expedient of starving the enemy out. England's position on the Channel gave her a stranglehold over Dutch commerce. Above a thousand of their merchant ships fell into her hands, and by degrees the effect of the blockade began to tell. The quays of the Zuyder Zee and the Rhine mouth were at a standstill. Whole fleets of vessels rode idle at their moorings; and the population of the Dutch cities soon felt the pinch of want. England herself was also suffering severely from the war, and many voices were clamouring to end it. Cromwell, however, stood firm. He had not at first approved of this attack on a fellow-Protestant nation (it was the one important point perhaps on which he was overruled); but, being in it, he was opposed to abandoning the struggle till the full fruits of its advantage had been reaped. In 1654 the Dutch climbed down and submitted to England's terms. So the war closed. England had challenged the Dutch supremacy and had

¹ The effect of the Navigation Act could not, in fact, have been fully felt for some time to come, the English ships not being as yet numerous enough to fulfil its stipulations.

won. The struggle was not as yet conclusively decided, and other rivals were to stand across the path before the carrying trade of the world was mainly British. But at least England had once more embraced her destiny. A new start was made. The Navigation Act encouraged new maritime ambitions. Blake had made of the fleet so fine an instrument that he may well deserve the title of its second founder. Cromwell himself was alive to the opportunity; and under his direction British foreign policy entered its third and final phase—the war with Spain.

War Against Spain.—The temptation to this war was undeniable. Here was a fleet, well-found, well-led, and recently victorious, a worthy successor of Elizabeth's tradition. Yonder was Spain, now an enfeebled shadow of her former self, possessing indeed vast territories and trade beyond the ocean, but possessing no longer the vigour to defend them. It was more than the militant democracy of England could resist; and Cromwell began to dream of reviving the exploits and strategy of Drake. A pretext for war was easily found. Englishmen who visited the Catholic King's dominions were still liable to religious persecution; English traders, too, were still jealously excluded from Spain's South American preserves. The Spanish Ambassador was told to ask his master for concessions on both points. "Ask for his two eyes," was the reply, "you would be as like to get them." So the pretext served and hostilities began. It was a trade war in the main, and not much was done at home. Eventually, it is true, Cromwell brought in the French to make a joint attack upon Dunkirk, a coveted coastal base which, together with the rest of the South Netherlands, had remained in the possession of the Spanish King. It was carried by storm in 1658, thanks chiefly to the valour of the incomparable Ironsides, who welcomed this opportunity of showing foreigners how Englishmen could fight. Dunkirk was not held long, and a few years later was sold by Charles II to the French. Apart from this, however, Cromwell's eyes were directed wholly towards the sea. "Providence," as he himself quaintly put it, "seems to lead us to an attack on the West Indies." So, while Blake went off into the Mediterranean to punish a nest of freebooters in Turkish Tunis for the seizure of some peaceful English traders, another fleet was despatched across the Atlantic with the admirals Penn and Venables in command. Their main attack, directed on San Domingo, the queen of Spanish islands in the West, was a complete fiasco; but before they returned home they succeeded in hoisting the English flag upon Jamaica, an island which the Spaniards had scarcely occupied as yet.

Cromwell must have the credit of perceiving the true value of such colonies to England. He took great pains to populate this new overseas possession, and he even formed a plan for linking up the two sets of colonies on the North American coast by capturing the small Dutch settlements which lay between them. By such far-sighted policies Cromwell showed himself a true pioneer of Empire. Nevertheless the idea

of harrying the Spanish trade-routes was still uppermost; and in 1657 Blake succeeded here as signally as Penn and Venables had failed. He caught the Spanish plate-fleet at Santa Cruz in the Canaries, off the coast of Africa, ran in under the fire of the shore batteries, and sank sixteen great galleons without losing a single vessel of his own. Cromwell died soon after, while the war was still in progress, and, on the whole, little more came out of it. Yet such victories as Blake's achieved their end. England redeemed thereby her damaged honour. She regained the world's respect, and the once despised Republic was now feared.

"Cromwell's greatness at home," says Clarendon, the Royalist historian, "was a mere shadow of his greatness abroad." Foreign monarchs spoke of him with awe as "the most invincible of sovereigns," "the greatest and happiest of princes." So far from refusing now to recognise his claims, they treated him practically on equal terms; and though Cromwell, it is said, was somewhat nettled because the King of France addressed him as "our cousin" instead of employing the term "our brother," more usual between friendly princes, yet it is unlikely that offence was meant. Certainly the influence which Cromwell wielded over continental courts was real enough. And of that influence one instance must suffice. Although the Thirty Years' War was now concluded, the religious feud was still smouldering in Southern France; and in 1655 the Duchess of Savoy had startled Europe by massacring a number of her Protestant subjects, the Piedmontese. The strongest indignation was felt in England: the poet Milton voiced it in his celebrated lines, "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints"; and Cromwell at once took steps. He brought such strong pressure to bear on the French King, and through him upon the Duchess of Savoy, that such an outrage was not repeated a second time. Europe, in truth, was now aware that, whatever else Englishmen had been doing the last ten years, they had at least learnt to fight. The very name of the Ironsides was a terror on the Continent; and had he been brought to power a quarter or half a century before, who knows what part Cromwell might not have played in that great religious struggle between the Protestant and Catholic States?¹

Thus successful was Cromwell's foreign policy. How, meanwhile, did he fare at home? We have said already that in some sense he failed. But let there be no mistake. His power, so long as he lived, increased rather than diminished; and it was used to much good purpose. Peace reigned. Law and order were enforced with a strong, perhaps too strong, a hand. The country recovered its prosperity, and in many ways there was a deal of progress made. Much, for instance, was done for education. New Grammar Schools were started, old ones set upon

¹ Whether Cromwell was wise to treat France in the friendly way he did is another matter. He certainly failed to see what was fast becoming evident—that the ambitions of Louis XIV were to prove a far greater menace to England than the outworn pretensions of a decadent Spain.

their feet; and, though Cromwell founded no fresh college at the Universities, he took various measures to encourage the study of ancient learning and to promote the advance of genuine enlightenment. Above all, religious difficulties were in a large measure overcome. Cromwell himself stood for all-round toleration, and for the first time since the Reformation the many sects enjoyed complete liberty of worship. Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and the growing fellowship of Quakers were each free to choose their own ministers and to conduct their services in their own way. Jews were allowed to build themselves a synagogue; and even the Roman Catholics were not seriously molested. There was only one exception, but that a serious one. Cromwell would not tolerate the ritual of the Established English Church. So gravely did he fear the Cavalier party, who still sighed for the Prayer-Book and the Bishops and the good old Sunday games, that he would admit none of that persuasion to any post or office under him. It was a Puritan Government through and through; and by the selfish blunder of this narrow policy the Commonwealth, as we shall see, was eventually undone.

Cromwell's failure, then, was not a failure of authority. He was never in serious danger of being overthrown. It lay rather in this, that he did not arrive at any adequate arrangement by which the people could have a say in the administration. He, the arch-enemy of despotism, could not bring himself to give democracy its head. The result was that his rule failed to express the true wishes of the people. It grew more and more unpopular as time went on; and with its author's death the fabric of government which he designed went utterly to pieces. The Protectorate proved too feeble to survive, because the Protector himself had been too strong.

Dismissal of the Rump.—Cromwell, however, was not as yet Protector when the crowning victory of Worcester set him at the country's head; and though from that year of 1651 he was practically supreme, he was not without a rival in the State. The Rump, that remnant of the Long Parliament, which had survived Pride's Purge, was still in theory the official Government; nor was it altogether so contemptible a rival as it might appear. Its chief spokesman and leader, Sir Harry Vane, was a man of large influence and noble character. The Great Council of State, from which both army and country took their orders, was drawn largely from among its members; and they did undeniably well in the Dutch war. Nevertheless the Rump was becoming a nuisance. Its numbers had been reduced to some three or four score men; and it was obvious that in no real sense did they any longer represent the nation. Yet they would not dissolve and make way for a new and properly elected Parliament. On the one hand, as ardent Puritans, they felt anxious lest the country might return a Parliament of unsound religious views. On the other hand, believing, as they naturally did, that Parliament and not a single man should be supreme, they felt extremely nervous about Cromwell's own intentions. So they clung to power, if

for no other reason, to keep him and other people out of it; and it became abundantly clear, as time went on, that either Cromwell or the Rump must go. Cromwell was determined it should be the Rump.

The crisis came to a head in 1653, when the Rump, having promised to dissolve, brought forward an audacious and preposterous measure to assure themselves of re-election. Cromwell went down to the House in a towering passion. For a while he fought his indignation down, quietly sitting in his accustomed seat. Then he rose and let loose the flood of his curious, uncouth, burning rhetoric, stamping to and fro on the floor of the House, lecturing, arguing, and protesting against the Rump's intolerable behaviour. But things had gone past words. Cromwell himself was dressed in plain black clothes and grey worsted stockings, but there were musketeers at the door, and it was easy to see what was in their master's mind. "This is the time; I must do it," he had said to Colonel Harrison. The musketeers were ordered into the House; upon which Sir Harry Vane cried out, "This is not common honesty." Cromwell turned on him with a voice of thunder: "Oh, Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane, the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" "Fetch him down!" he then said, pointing to the Speaker. The Speaker was removed from his chair by force. "What shall we do with this bauble?" he added, pointing to the mace, the Speaker's symbol of authority; and he gave it to a musketeer to take away. When the House was cleared of all its members, he had the door locked behind them and returned to the Palace at Whitehall.

The Protector and His Parliaments.—It was a strong act, perhaps a necessary act; but it was a turning-point: it marked Cromwell for what now and henceforth he really was—a military dictator. Not even Charles I in his worst days had attempted anything like this. It struck a death-blow at the treasured institution of Parliamentary freedom. Nevertheless, throughout the whole five years which elapsed between this *coup* in '53 and his death in '58 Cromwell strove honestly and incessantly to place his despotic power on a legitimate basis. He did his best to provide a new constitution for the State in the place of what he had destroyed. His first experiment was typical of the man. The deep religious sense which was the core and motive of his every act suggested to him that none could fitly settle this momentous question but those whose souls were right with God. The decision must be left with godly men. Accordingly he sent through the length and breadth of England and collected from the nominees of all the churches 140 Puritans of noted piety and saintly life. In a long harangue, more like a sermon than a speech, he told them that their task it was to settle the future shape of the country's government; then, aptly closing with Psalm lxviii., his own hymn of triumph at Dunbar, he left them to their labours.

This strange assembly, known after one of its members, a certain Praise-God Barebones, as the "Barebones Parliament," soon made itself the laughing-stock of history. The saintly men had no better notions in their heads than to destroy the Universities, seeing that "the godly

have no need of learning," to reduce the costs of law-suits to a sum of 40 shillings; and even, so rumour said, to remodel English institutions on the lines laid down by the Mosaic Law. There was nothing for it but to get rid of such fools quickly. By skilful wire-pulling the Barebones Parliament was induced to dissolve itself (by a snatch vote taken when but few of them were present) and to surrender what power it had into Cromwell's keeping. Discouraged and disappointed, Cromwell stood once more alone; and it was clear that the future constitution must be settled by some other means than appeal to the consciences of saints or cranks.

In Cromwell's own mind one deep conviction had now long since been forming. It was not from selfish or ambitious motives, but from sheer hard thought, that he arrived at the belief that a country's interest is best served by committing the real power to a single pair of hands. Others at many different times have shared in this belief. Plato confessed to it; the United States, with an all-powerful President at their head, adhere to it to-day; and Cromwell himself had, after all, the long tradition of English monarchy behind him when he decided to shoulder the whole responsibility of government himself. With the aid of his advisers a written constitution was drawn up, called the Instrument of Government. This ordained that a single person under the title of Protector should rule the land, with a Council of State (which was to sit in permanence) and a Parliament (which was to sit at three-year intervals) to assist him. The relation between the Parliament and the Protector was ill defined, and over the Parliament's acts the Protector had no veto or control.

Here lay the seed of future jealousies, and Cromwell little dreamt what trouble was in store when these occasional Parliaments were called. The first, which met on 3rd September, 1654, quarrelled with him from the outset, claiming for itself powers which by the Instrument belonged to him. He thankfully dissolved it, when five months, its legal minimum, was up. His second Parliament was tamer, mainly because one hundred refractory members were excluded at the start. The rest began by presenting him with what they called their "Humble Petition and Advice," which was nothing less than an offer of the crown. Cromwell had often thought of this solution. "What," he once said darkly, "if a man should take upon himself to be a king?" But the army was against it; he himself felt no "clear call"; his conscience told him to refuse, and he refused it. At the next session the excluded members were admitted; and on their arrival the House's temper changed. So the second Parliament went the way of the first and Cromwell was left once more in solitary command. Perhaps the Parliaments were more to blame than he for these repeated disagreements; but none the less the experiment had failed. The free voice of the country had been stifled. Cromwell had forsaken the argument of reason for the argument of force. The despot in him had won over the democrat; and he was now ruling precisely as Charles I himself had claimed to rule.

The Major-Generals.—Nevertheless it was not altogether this failure to win Parliament's co-operation that turned the country against Cromwell. It is the small things in life that count most with the ordinary man: and the Protector's most unpardonable blunder touched very closely upon the lives of ordinary men. After his first Parliament's dismissal in 1655 the fear of discontent and insurrection had driven him to a measure of naked military force. England was divided into eleven Provinces, and eleven Major-Generals were put in command of these, with wide powers of control and troops of cavalry to back them. The discipline imposed by these military governors was of the strongest. It was their business to keep a watchful and suspicious eye on all foreigners visiting England. They were to see that no Royalist estate escaped severe taxation. They were even to prevent men from travelling about the country without honest and reasonable excuse. Had their interferences there ended, small harm would have been done; but, astonishing as it may seem, it was the Major-Generals' further duty to inculcate the "godly life." They were Puritans themselves, serving a Puritan Protector; and their notion of a godly life was very strict indeed. Unnecessary public-houses were suppressed; all others ordered to close down at dusk. Idlers and minstrels were to be banished. Actors were forbidden to act. The exercising of horses was forbidden on Sunday, the holding of markets even on the day before. Cock-fights and bear-baitings were henceforth declared illegal; and our old friend Colonel Pride held a private execution of the bears which were kept for the purpose in the Southwark Gardens. Even newspapers were proscribed: and only two, which slavishly played up to the Protector, were permitted to appear. In short, the Major-Generals were engaged in turning England into a reformatory; and the Puritans, harmless enough so long as they kept their rules of behaviour to themselves, were proving more intolerable tyrants than ever Laud had been. Cromwell had the wisdom to withdraw the Major-Generals after a year's trial. But the harm was done. The Puritans were never in a majority, and all this hypocrisy stank in the nostrils of an easy-going, pleasure-loving folk, and they began to look back with something very like regret to the old days when Charles was king and when honest enjoyment was not as yet considered an invention of the Devil; and sometimes, perhaps, their thoughts began to turn to a certain young man who still sat across the water, waiting.

Cromwell must have realised his failure as he drew near his end; and his end was now very near. He had never recovered from an ague caught on his Scottish campaign, and in the summer of '58 it was clear that he was failing. He continued at his work almost to the end of August, then took to his bed. At the close of the month a tremendous storm burst over the kingdom, dealing devastation far and wide; and the Cavaliers vowed that the Devil had come to fetch their arch-enemy's soul. While the winds roared tempestuously, Cromwell was sinking, and then in the stillness after the storm he passed peacefully away. It was 3rd September, his "day."

It is not always easy to be fair to Cromwell, and even while we admit that he tried to do his duty, even as Charles I after his own peculiar lights endeavoured to do his, yet it is tempting to point and say, here he was inconsistent, and here again missing what was so obviously the right course he took what was so obviously the wrong. Obvious, perhaps, to us, but not to him: and we ourselves, let us remember, are seated as it were upon the hilltop and thence may look down securely on the lower slopes up which the characters of history toil. We can see, mapped so clearly to our feet, the devious route by which the track leads upwards, the detour by which this obstacle or that should be avoided, the points at which the path grows faint, but still continues. But from the climber on the hillside all these things are hidden. The mists blind him; streams are across his way; the rocks seem often to afford no passage; and he must grope on, guided only by a blind and erring instinct, to his unseen goal. So it is with history. If we would be just to the men of former ages, we must, so far as may be, imagine ourselves back in their position on the uncharted hillside: we must realise the difficulties which faced them, and remember that the secrets of the future and the very goal towards which they darkly struggled were all the while hidden from their eyes. If Cromwell failed, who would have succeeded? and that is more, perhaps, than we need ask of Charles.

The Interregnum.—When the master-hand was removed, England was at once all at sixes and sevens. Whether or no Cromwell had named a successor is uncertain; but his son Richard, a worthy fellow, but utterly incapable, was stuck up for the time being on the Protector's chair. Six months of it was enough for him and everybody; and Tumbledown Dick, as men humorously called him, went back again to his farming. The only persons who retained any semblance of authority were the army commanders, of whom General Lambert was the strongest; but even they were divided. The Rump turned up again, like a bad penny, resumed their seats, and quarrelled with the army. Even the Cavaliers began to show their heads, and there was fighting. All through 1659 this intolerable condition of affairs continued, and never perhaps since the Middle Ages had England been more completely in the hands of factious soldiers. Seldom had things worn an uglier look. But there was an element which had not yet been consulted and with whom the ultimate decision was still bound to lie—the People, the plain folk who were sick to death of the soldiers' hectoring, who had too long been victims to the self-assertion of loud-voiced minorities, and who now sighed once more for a free Parliament, honestly elected and secure from interference, to express their real desires. And then quite suddenly the People found a champion. After Cromwell's victory over the Scots at Worcester he had set George Monk, a man of real character and wisdom, to govern Scotland. Monk had a clear head on his shoulders, and seeing that nobody else would, he resolved to end this chaos himself. On the first day of 1660 he crossed the Tweed with an army



A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY INN, LUDLOW



A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY HOUSE

at his back, moved south very slowly, and giving Lambert's hot-headed attempt at opposition enough time to melt away, he entered London unopposed. Bells were rung and bonfires lighted when Monk issued the writs for a genuine Parliament at last. When the new Parliament met there was only one course for it to take. Monk declared that he would not answer for the consequences if they lost a moment in calling the King over. It was the choice which they themselves, and the folk they represented, would have made. The invitation went across to Holland, and on 25th of May, 1660, Charles II disembarked in Dover Roads. His entry into London was a veritable triumph, "the wayes strew'd with flowers, the bells ringing, the streets hung with tapistry, fountaines running with wine." From the greatest to the lowest in the land, all opened their arms to the new King and cheered him to the echo. The long quarrel of twenty years and over was forgotten in that day's rejoicing; and, after all, it had been a quarrel not so much with the kingship in itself as the use which a particular king had made of it. This innocent young man, whose grace and courtesy were admired of all beholders, seemed to have the makings of such a true English monarch as the nation might take proudly and gratefully to its heart. They little knew.

CHAPTER XIV

RESTORATION ENGLAND

I

The Restored Aristocracy.—Such was the Restoration of 1660. What, then, did it restore? The Stuart family certainly, though only for a brief space of thirty years. The monarchy in a sense, but not the same old monarchy of pre-war days. Talk of Divine Right is henceforth somewhat hushed. Legitimate taxation is left in the hands of Parliament; and the constitution, openly at least, is not much tampered with. The wise child fears the fire which has burned his father's fingers; and Charles II was nothing if he was not wise. So, whatever were the private ambitions cherished in his heart, the restored monarch lacked the arrogant self-assertion of the old. What, however, did come back in 1660 with all its old splendour of privilege and power was the English aristocracy. The true Restoration was the Restoration of the Royalist squires. Both now and for nearly two centuries to come this class of half-feudal landowners was still to possess the deciding voice in English politics. Their powerful influence over a population which was still agricultural in the main gave them a peculiar hold over the elections of parliamentary members; and they were largely able either to nominate the men returned to Westminster or else to go themselves. Thus it was the squires who, so long as they approved its policy, maintained the House of Stuart upon the throne. It was the withdrawal of their

favour (if not their active opposition) which overthrew the last of the English dynasty and brought in a foreign king. It was the squires again—Tories as they now came to call themselves—who throughout the following century upheld the shaken authority of Church and Crown, and restrained the too impetuous progress of the more liberal Whigs. Finally, it was the same squires still, beginning from 1840 to be called Conservatives, who, when the giant of Democracy began to rise in strength, yet strove to hold it down, and who have only relinquished in our own day perhaps the last remnants of that tremendous power to which the Restoration of King Charles more than two centuries ago had recovered them the title.

After his ten years of foreign exile or temporary eclipse at home, the squire was not slow or sorry to return in 1660 to the house of his fathers. His estates were unconditionally¹ restored to him. The old hall and its retainers welcomed him back; and he set to work at once to re-establish his fortunes and his home. The breach made in his walls by Cromwell's gun-powder was patched up; the furniture stolen by some Roundhead rascals replaced. The gaps in his timber-woods, occasioned by the necessities of the war, were, so far as possible, replenished. And maybe, if he were a man of taste, he would go so far as to adorn his house with a new wing or portico copied from the fine Renaissance mansions seen on his recent travels, or to plant out his gardens with trim yew hedges in the style he had admired among the Dutch. Yet such alterations and repairs were but a passing interlude; and presently the squire would settle down in his old leisurely way to farm his lands and manage his estate, as though nothing much had happened during the last twenty years. These duties were, after all, the main business of his life. Great earls and marquises might journey about the country or play their part at Court. But the average squire was cut upon a humbler pattern. He seldom travelled further afield than to join a fox-hunt or to eat a dinner with a county neighbour. He rarely went to town. And, in fact, he was by no means the polished or educated fellow that one might expect. Very often he was little or no different from the superior type of farmer of to-day; and he behaved as such. He would ride to market upon a thick-set cob, discuss the price of pigs over a pot of ale, and crack jokes with all and sundry in the full broad accent of his native dialect. But though he gave himself no highflown or superior airs, yet, for all that, the squire in his own way was a fine gentleman. He was intensely jealous of the honour of the house. He thought a deal of his pedigree of forebears who had borne the family crest since Cregy or before; and, when he had the cash, he would have his portrait painted in oils by some Dutch artist and hung in the long gallery beside his father's. In short, the pride of birth was still strong

¹ Some, however, who had been paid by the Roundheads for their estates, were held to have thereby forfeited the right to them. This caused considerable annoyance; but the fact remained that only those whose lands had been confiscated outright were reinstated.

in him; and it was still strong in its influence on others. For the squire commanded an immense respect among his immediate neighbours. He was the little monarch of the village; and there was not one among the rustics who would not stop and pull a forelock as he passed them on the road. Even the more independent yeoman-proprietors looked up to him and were glad of his advice in difficulties or his sympathy in trouble. Indeed, in many ways the squire held what was almost an official title to the people's homage. He was, of course, a Justice of the Peace, and went regularly to take his place on the bench at quarter-sessions.¹ In his more vigorous days he held a commission in the county train-bands; and, even though his ideas of military science might be crude, the part he had played at Newbury or Edgehill was still the favourite boast of his hobbledehoy militia-men. Besides this, a large proportion of his neighbours were in his direct employ, and, though the days of feudal slavery were now gone by, his power over them was still considerable. On him they were dependent for their modest wage of four or five shillings weekly, or for the farm produce which was often given them in lieu of it. Dismissal from his service would stamp them with a bad character, and, as they knew, a job would then be difficult to find elsewhere. Finally, in most cases the squire was their landlord as well as their employer, and the lively fear of eviction from their houses was more than enough to silence all thought of disrespect or insubordination. In short, the squire held three-quarters of the village in the hollow of his hand; and in days when nine-tenths of the whole population lived upon the land, when education was of the rudest, when railway trains were not invented and newspapers were confined to the great cities, when, in fact, the world was bounded for most individuals by the limits of their native village, or at best by the road to the nearest market town, then it is not difficult to see how commanding and responsible a figurehead the local lord of the manor must have been.

The Restored Church.—Nor did the extent of his authority stop there. The Restoration, which had reinstated the squire, reinstated also the Established English Church; and for him, as we shall see, this was not without considerable advantages. The Commonwealth government's attempt to dragoon the rural districts into Puritan beliefs had not been a particular success. True, the old authorised Prayer-Books had duly been put away. Some show of welcome had been extended to the strange minister, a Baptist by creed, an ex-tailor by profession, who was sent to take charge of the parish; and his new-fangled exhortations to lead the "godly life" and forsake the wicked ways of profanity and drink had been listened to with a mingled good-humour and contempt. It was nevertheless with a genuine satisfaction that the majority of the simple rustics saw the interloper vanish, and the old, easy-going parson, who had grown grey among them and knew all the children by their Christian

¹ Since Tudor times the local administration of the countryside had been largely in the hands of these Justices who tried petty offenders, kept up roads and prisons, managed the Poor Laws and even controlled prices and wages.

names, take up his residence once more at the rectory house; nor was that satisfaction shared by anyone more readily than by the squire himself. Squires there were, of course, who had been Puritans too in their day and had fought against the King throughout the war; but these gentlemen had been quick enough to change their tune when the King's son came into his own again.

To remain a Puritan meant permanent association with shopkeepers and tradesfolk, exclusion from the ranks of better-class society, and not improbably active persecution and imprisonment as well. Take it for all in all, the Established Church was the only possible religion for a gentleman; and it is small wonder that, whatever his personal convictions, the average squire embraced it with enthusiasm. Nor did his zeal go unrepaid. In the little village kingdom of the countryside the Church was the squire's most valuable ally. The parson, who in most cases owed to him the bestowal of the "living," was, in all matters sacred and profane, his right-hand man. Seldom of gentle birth, often ill-educated, nearly always miserably poor, the rural clergyman was little better than a menial to the man at the big house; toadied him and flattered him when invited at rare intervals to dinner (knowing his place well enough, moreover, to rise and take his leave as soon as dessert and wine appeared upon the table); lent a hand with his accounts; rearranged his library; tutored his son and helped to get in his hay-crop; and, above all, backed him through thick and thin, alike in parish politics and in the pulpit. The result was that the squire was regarded by the parishioners as a more authoritative spokesman on matters of religion than even the parson himself. At church he would occupy a great square pew, annexing to itself the best part of the building, while the village men and matrons sat huddled away into the aisle. Perhaps, like Sir Roger de Coverley in the "Spectator" Papers, he would stand up during the prayers to count the members of the congregation; and at the church-door afterwards, while he stood to receive the curseys and salutes, he would administer a mild rebuke or put a kind inquiry to the relatives of absentees. No wonder that the squire, in his political views, was conservatively inclined; the existing condition of affairs gave him all that he could ask; and, when the favourite Tory toast of Church and State was given after dinner, he might well thank God for the Royalist Restoration, which had given him a Church and State so admirably combined to his advantage.

The Established Church and Dissenters.—Thus in rural England the cramping tradition of a semi-feudal aristocracy still lingered on. Progress and freedom and enlightenment belonged to the capital and the towns. The town-dwellers, the money-making bourgeois, the class which a hundred and fifty years later was reckoned by Napoleon to be the backbone of the nation, were still in 1660 small in numbers, but were strong in their self-trust and independence. From their ranks, as we have seen, the Parliamentary armies were recruited. Within the shelter of their homes the Puritan religion had found birth; nor did these

stalwart folk make surrender of their faith with the same easy compliance as the Roundhead squires. Despite the cruel and repeated persecutions of the next thirty years, they remained (and in a large measure still remain) outside the pale of the Established Church. That Church, to its own irreparable loss, came henceforth to be regarded as an institution run in the interests of the rich and gentle-born; and the Puritans of the Revolution, continuing to shun it, became the Dissenters of the next and the succeeding ages. Under that name there was, of course, comprised a stupendous variety of creeds. It has been estimated that at the close of the Civil War there were already above 170 different sects. Besides the Anabaptists, Presbyterians, Separatists, Brownists, and such-like, there were scores of obscure societies of which little more than the name is known; and we are told of one enterprising fellow who, failing to agree with any sect he knew of, founded one of his own and publicly baptised himself!

All these sects differed in one way or another from the creed or ritual of the Established Church; but in the long run it will be found that those sects were the most popular which resembled it most closely. Thus the Society of Friends, or Quakers, started by George Fox, a midland shoemaker, about 1640, because it went to the extreme length of banishing all ritual and dispensing altogether with the service of appointed ministers, has remained comparatively small in numbers. Far more successful was the effort of John Wesley, who began his wonderful career as a touring preacher just a century later. Wesley himself never left the Church of England; but his followers, the Methodists, though scarcely differing upon essential points, broke loose from her and became the most popular and most numerous of all dissenting bodies. The fact is that the disunion which prevails to-day among Christian Englishmen has arisen only in part from differences of creed. The social and political cleavage, which was closely connected with its origin, has also continued to perpetuate it. The Restoration of 1660 was indeed a parting of the ways. One way went the Established Church favoured by the upper class of gentry and their lower class dependants. The other way went the multiplicity of Nonconformist sects, supported in the main by shopkeepers and artisans of the lower middle class. These are the true religious heirs of the seventeenth-century Puritans who, in their revolt against an unconstitutional monarch, rebelled also against a constitutional Church. The political dispute has long since been forgotten. The religious differences remain.

Puritan and Royalist Morality.—Yet the Puritan spirit has not left its mark upon one class alone. For better or for worse it has in many ways affected the whole national character itself. The Puritans were apt to be sad folk; they took an austere and gloomy view of life; all frivolity and merry-making was to their minds a sin, a failure to realise the solemn purposes of God; and the influence of this stern morality has so far survived two centuries that its effects are not extinct even in our own times. If (as they generally did) our grandfathers and grand-

mothers considered the theatre as shockingly improper, and looked on ballet-dancing as an invention of the Evil One, it was because the Puritans—too often with good reason—had set the fashion of boycotting the stage. If, still quite recently, Sunday was regarded as a day of unrelieved oppression, allowing of no amusement less serious than a walk and no literature more frivolous than pious tales, it was the Puritans who first taught and popularised this notion of the Sabbath. If, again, the interior of English churches are still cold and bare, their walls a white-washed blank, their atmosphere forbidding, it is because the Puritans disliked not merely ritual, but whatever might distract or please the eye. Beauty of all sorts appeared to them as a snare and a delusion; and so far as the English are an inartistic nation, their lack of taste is due not to any permanent defect in their character, but to the false and ridiculous Puritan notion that the senses were given us to despise, to ignore, and, if possible, to suppress, but never to use or to enjoy.

The Puritan spirit has indeed much to answer for: it starved one side of human nature cruelly; and the recovery has been slow. As a nation, the English have yet to learn how to use and value rightly the best gifts of God, who has made all things fair. Yet there is another side to the picture; and the Puritan strain in men has also been productive of much good. Their high sense of the importance of right conduct, coming as it did at a time when men's ideals were not high, could not but influence the best among the nation. Undoubtedly it led then, and has led since, to much self-righteousness and cant. It produced such characters as we see in Charles Dickens' Stiggins, a preacher who did not practise what he preached; and too often it has given the English people the reputation of being little better than a hypocritical race. Yet the sober earnestness of Cromwell's men, their noble sense of duty, and their rigid insistence upon the claims of conscience, these, too, have left their mark. The high standard expected of individual conduct, the purity of English family life, the strict conventions of public decorum and restraint, are qualities which, so far as they exist today, are due, in part at least to Puritan forefathers. England may not indeed be better than her neighbours; but it is something, at any rate, to have aimed at being so.

For all this, however, the Puritans were not in themselves wholly responsible. They would never have been able to influence the mind of posterity so deeply had not their opponents of the Royalist Court contrived, upon the other hand, so violently to shock it. It was the vice and frivolity of Charles II's favourites which turned the scales and gave the strait-laced moralists their chance. This outlook of loose living was no mere accident. In part, no doubt, it was an inevitable reaction against the almost excessive virtue of the Puritan régime. But, naturally enough, the men who had spent their last ten years dawdling away their exile in continental cities and picking up lax ways among dissolute companions, came back to England very different from what they had set out. Charles himself set the fashion, and very soon the

palace became a sink of immorality and debauch. Dinners at which diners were left under the table, theatrical performances through which no decent man could sit, gambling which led to duels, and love-making that led to worse,—these were the everyday diversions of the “upper ten.” Whitehall was a constant scene of gaiety and movement. The King kept open house at all hours of day and night to the society of London; and men thronged the royal ante-rooms to gather the day’s news and discuss the latest scandal of the town. In the morning his special friends were admitted to the bedchamber while the monarch’s lengthy toilette was completing¹; and there was always ample time for conversation while the Court perruquier was dressing the great wig which Charles, along with every man of rank and fashion, used to wear—a grotesque and uncomfortable head-gear, shaped like a modern judge’s, to flow down over the shoulders, but varying in colour from all shades of brown to black. The dressing done, the party would stroll out into the park, accosted on the way by numerous acquaintances and still more numerous petitioners for royal favour. One noble earl would require some valuable sinecure at Court for his dunce of a younger son; another would put in a word for some starveling poet whose work he affected to approve; a third possessed, maybe, some poor relation whom debt or misdemeanour had carried into prison and who expected by his aid to get out of it again. So the morning passed; and after luncheon the King would take a turn of exercise on horseback or in the tennis-court—for with all his vices Charles was by habit an energetic man. Dinner began early in those days—at four or five; and it ran on far into the night. The bottle went round unceasingly, and then tongues were indeed let loose. Tales were told, and many a sharp exchange of repartee took place. Conversation in those days was an art, and a humorous saying never lacked appreciation or applause. Charles himself had a smart and waggish way with him; and whether joking was popular because he set the fashion or whether he was popular because he followed it, it is all one. The Restoration Court was, at any rate, the place to go for laughter.

II

Seventeenth-Century Literature.—Seeing that wit was then the quality which every man and woman most admired, it is only natural that the literature of the Restoration period is notable for little else. Jokes soon grow stale—more especially if they are better not repeated—and few of the fashionable writers of the day have achieved lasting fame. John Dryden is perhaps the only poet of the witty school whom men still read. His satire, “Absalom and Achitophel,” in which he employed the thin disguise of a Bible story to deliver shrewd thrusts of biting sarcasm at the chief politicians of the time, may within its own narrow limits be called a masterpiece. But, strange as it may seem, it

¹ Hence the term “levée” originally bore a literal sense, in days when the courtiers did actually assist the sovereign to “get up.”

was the "inartistic" Puritans who produced the only literature fully deserving of that name. The greatest poet but one among all Englishmen was Cromwell's private secretary, John Milton. Both in that capacity and also by the writing of several political pamphlets, Milton did much good service to the Parliamentary cause. But the strain of overwork cost him his sight; and in a blind old age, when all that he had lived and striven for seemed lost, Milton found comfort in dictating to his daughters the lines of the immortal epic—worthy to be ranked alone with Virgil's "*Æneid*" and the "*Divine Comedy*" of Dante—"Paradise Lost." Though the poem's true greatness lies first and foremost in the gigantic conception of its theme and characters, and in the musical majesty of its blank verse, yet the spirit of the whole is essentially religious. The Puritan peeps out behind the poet; and the moral earnestness, as well as the obscure and crabbed theology which pervaded it, stamp the author as a true disciple of the Revolutionaries' creed. Very different, but in its own way scarcely less great, was the work of a man as ignorant and unlettered as Milton himself was learned. John Bunyan,¹ a tinker by trade, became an early convert to Puritan opinions, and after the Restoration suffered long imprisonment for his beliefs in Bedford gaol. While there (so at least tradition says, though critics cast a doubt) he wrote the "*Pilgrim's Progress*." This masterpiece of English prose is clearly the product of an unsophisticated and simple soul. It aspires to no such flights of fancy as we find in Milton; it does not imitate the classics of the past as he does; but it is none the less alive with the passionate conviction of a man who had suffered (inwardly no less than outwardly) for his religious faith. It is full of that deep insight into human nature which belongs to those that have striven honestly to know themselves; and as long as men read anything they will continue to delight in the quaint allegory which describes the pilgrimage of Master Christian through the world and the rough adventures he encountered on his long road to the Celestial City; how, caught in the Slough of Despond, he first braced himself to cast the encumbering load of sin from off his shoulders; how he entered the tempting market Vanity Fair, and how (like the author himself) he there suffered persecution and imprisonment at the hands of the gay and godless folk; how he fought with that grim monstrosity Apollyon and came victorious through the fight; and how finally, with the aid of good man Faithful, he sighted the city on the hill-top and came at last, weary but triumphant, to his journey's end. Bunyan has none of the wit or the pithiness of Dryden. At times he is apt to be long-winded. Perhaps he moralises overmuch: but he is terribly in earnest. Nothing here is superficial or ephemeral. His eyes see down far below the surface of our mortal nature; and his work will not grow stale. If an age is to be known by what it writes, then we must confess that it was the Puritan and not the Cavalier who in the seventeenth century came most nearly to expressing the deeper and more permanent emotions of the English mind.

¹ See Plate XV, opp. page 326.

The Growth of Science.—Perhaps, however, the intellectual work most characteristic of Restoration England is to be sought not so much in literature as in science. English science, in fact, may properly be said to date from the epoch of the civil wars. The great discoveries of the previous century, made under the first impulse of Renaissance learning, had for the most part been the work of foreign thinkers, such as the two astronomers, Galileo of Pisa and Kepler the German. With the Stuarts, however, Englishmen too began to join the quest for truth. Chemistry became a fashionable hobby. Raleigh and Prince Rupert dabbled in it. Even Charles II was touched by the craze; and it was he who, in 1662, presented its original charter to the so-called Royal Society, a club formed “for the promotion of physico-mathematical experimental learning.” Among its members was numbered the great genius Sir Isaac Newton, whose studies first revealed the Law of Gravitation and the threefold composition of white light. Natural laws, which earlier theorists had but guessed at, were now tested and applied by practical experiment. The circulation of the blood, first announced by Harvey in King James’ reign, was now examined microscopically and the blood-vessels detected. Aided by such research as this, medical science forged ahead. Careful collection of botanical and zoological specimens were made. The tides, the theory of magnetism, and the motion of comets were investigated by Halley and others. In 1675 Greenwich Observatory was built; and thus in a hundred ways the foundations of modern scientific progress were laid down.

Nor was the spread of this scientific spirit without its influence on everyday affairs. Merchants began to organise their businesses on more systematic lines. Finance was studied more intelligently, and methods of banking were copied from the Dutch. Agriculture, too, began to benefit by the invention of new implements and new manures. We seem, in fact, to be passing into an atmosphere more closely resembling the age of modern civilisation. Newspapers become more numerous and more ambitious, though indeed their news, still printed upon a single sheet, would scarcely fill a column of “The Times.” Material comforts rapidly increase. Houses are planned with a keener eye to domestic conveniences; and the man of moderate means now learns to build himself a dwelling far snugger and more practical than the spacious and unhomelike mansions of the great. Furniture-making becomes an art which considers usefulness rather than mere necessity or show. Instead of the cumbersome and uncomfortable chairs of Elizabethan and Cromwellian times, we find chairs with slender legs and nicely rounded backs. Increasing trade brings useful commodities from overseas; and mahogany will soon oust oak as the favourite material of the upholsterer. Tea becomes a fashionable beverage, and “coffee-houses” are the regular rendezvous of the idle and the “wits,” and, though the fastidious man of taste is partial to peppering his nose with snuff, many prefer to smoke the tobacco from Virginia. We even find Mr. Samuel Pepys, Clerk to His Majesty’s Board of the Admiralty, noting in a private diary

the extravagant and burdensome expenditure of his wife upon new hats. Most assuredly we are approaching to the modern age.

Yet we must not imagine that Restoration England led an altogether secure and comfortable life. Man's mastery over nature was still very far from complete. Travelling, for instance, was at best a very tedious, and at worst a perilous, adventure. The roads were vile. Their central track of supposedly firm ground was often bordered by a quagmire of churned mud some feet in depth, and woe betide the unskilful driver who got bogged in it. A coach which set out with a team of less than six was flying in the face of Providence; and even so there were other and worse risks to be run than mud. Bridges were none too numerous; and after rain the fords were frequently impassable. Tragedies of vehicles engulfed and passengers drowned in their seats were far from rare. Then, too, the dreary wastes of unpoliced and unpopulated moorland through which the unhappy traveller needs must pass afforded a golden opportunity for crime. Highwaymen held up coaches even in broad daylight, stripped the "fares" of their belongings, and so successfully evaded the weak arm of the law that whole districts continued for years at a time to lie at the mercy of their depredations. Even in the Capital itself the man who ventured in the streets by night was seldom safe. Footpads and ruffian soldiers lurked in dark corners to waylay passers-by. The city watchmen, though increased, were still inadequate. Till 1684 street lamps were unknown; and only the rich could afford the luxury of an attendant "linksman" to light the passage of their sedan-chair through the ill-laid and unilluminated streets. But the thing, perhaps, which will demonstrate most clearly the ill-organised condition of society and the comparative helplessness of man is the fate which befell London in the opening year of Charles II's reign. Within fifteen months of 1665 and 1666 two terrible catastrophes occurred so overwhelming in the havoc which they wrought and so far beyond the power of human ingenuity to combat that they seem at once to plunge us back into the barbaric atmosphere of a dark and primitive age.

The Plague.—Omens were not wanting of the impending doom. During the winter of 1664-65 a huge comet was seen blazing in the skies. A wild fanatic, more than half-naked, hovered about the streets crying, "O great and dreadful God!" while another prophet announced, like Jonah at Nineveh, "Yet forty days and London shall be destroyed." When the Plague came the superstitious vowed that it was Heaven's punishment on the wickedness of the City and the lewdness of the Court. In the early months of '65 goods shipped from the Levant brought the infection; and the old malady, which, since the days of the Black Death in 1350, had revisited England at frequent intervals, began to claim its victims once again. With the heat of summer its intensity increased, and between June and the following December the Plague was at its height. By autumn as many as 7000 persons were dying in one week; and apart from Norwich and other cities to which the sickness spread,



THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, LONDON



LONDON BRIDGE AND THE CITY, 1616



the death-roll in the Capital alone was reckoned at 70,000. All who had the means to escape fled into the country. The King and his associates retired, first to Hampton Court, then later to Winchester and Salisbury. The less fortunate remained to die, and no human help could save them. The doctors, still lamentably few in numbers, were completely baffled; and the terror-stricken populace fell back for want of better on the specious remedies of quacks. Defoe, in his "*Journal of the Plague*"—written, we must remember, many years after, and not without some added spice of mere romance—tells us of these various and much-vaunted drugs: "*Anti-pestilential Pills*," "*Sovereign cordials against the infection of the air*," "*Incomparable drink against the Plague never found out before*." The City authorities did what they could. Orders were issued that every house in which a case occurred should have painted on its door, "*a red cross of a foot long*," and the words, "*Lord, have mercy upon us*." Special "*searchers*," armed with a red wand of office, visited and reported on such houses. But little could it avail. The City was labouring in its death-agony. Grass grew along the pavements; business was at a standstill; no one knew but each day might be his last. Men and women dropped in the streets, so sudden was the seizure, and died in the places where they lay. In some houses every inhabitant was dead. Ordinary methods of burial were soon impossible: and vast pits were dug in the fields beyond the suburbs. Dead-carts preceded by a bell-man went round from house to house collecting the corpses to be taken off and shot like so much rubbish into these hideous graves. But at last the fury of the plague was spent: with colder weather fresh cases became rarer, and then stopped. Business was resumed; the Court returned to Whitehall; and London settled down again into its normal life.

The Great Fire.—Then suddenly in the autumn of next year came the Great Fire. It originally started at the King's bakery in Pudding Lane, close by the river. London houses were then mostly built of wood, and they burnt like so much tinder. To make matters worse a gale sprang up, carrying the flames from house to house and across the streets, which were frequently so narrow that the projecting gables of the opposite houses almost touched. Attempts were made here and there to clear a space by which the fire might have been checked. Houses were blown up with gunpowder or otherwise pulled down. But these efforts were ill-organized. The whole people were in a panic; no one knew where to turn, and Pepys met the Lord Mayor himself running about with a handkerchief round his neck, crying, "*Lord, what can I do? The people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses, but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it*." For five days the fire held the mastery. It was a terrible and majestic sight. Showers of "*fire-balls*," as Pepys calls them, made it impossible to approach the main area of the fire. At night the City was "*one entire arch of fire, a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire*." The lead of St. Paul's roof was melted and ran in

hissing rivulets down the narrow, winding streets. The very pavements were "glowing with a fiery redness." Nearly half the population was unhoused; and the poor wretches, thousands of them gentle born, camped under miserable tents and hovels in the fields outside the City. The King, who acted throughout with great pluck and presence of mind, showed much concern over the provision for their needs. When, on

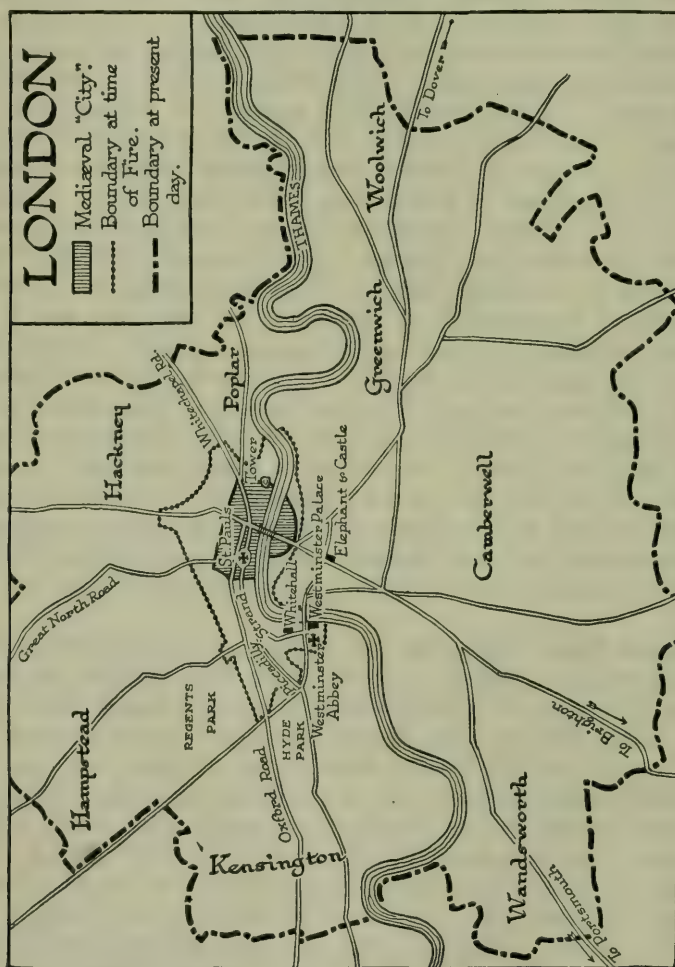


Fig. 28.

7th September, the wind dropped and the fire was at last got under control, a full square mile of the very centre of the City had been wiped out.

The New London.—The fire was something more than a catastrophe. It was a landmark. It divides the era of the old, uncomfortable, haphazard days from the new era of scientific and civilised security. New London was a symbol of the change to modern times; for out of the

ashes of the old, ramshackle, mediæval town rose, phoenix-like, the great metropolis we know. At the date of the fire London might be divided roughly into two main districts. First there was the City proper, contained within the semicircular ring of the old defensive walls, and stretching from the Tower in the east to the Temple in the west, and from the river Thames upon the south to the borders of Smithfield on the north. Here, where nowadays are mostly shops and offices and business houses, the merchants and shopkeepers then lived themselves. The "City" was the residential as well as the business quarter of the town. Outside the City walls, however, in Whitechapel and Stepney, and beyond the river to the south, the poorer classes had spread the unwholesome slums—tenements where they multiplied and drudged in ever-increasing numbers. Unhappily it was the first and not the second of these districts which the Great Fire destroyed. All, or nearly all, of the heart of the City was eaten out. Old St. Paul's, the noble Gothic building where so many historic scenes had taken place, was left a mere husk. Eighty-nine churches had been gutted.

The gigantic task of reconstruction called for an architectural giant, and by a great stroke of good fortune the genius was at hand. Sir Christopher Wren was not given so free a hand as perhaps he should have been. The streets were not laid out upon an ordered and scientific plan such as he himself proposed; and too often the rebuilding followed on the old, cramped, irregular lines. But Wren was able at least to replace the old St. Paul's by a new domed building in Renaissance style, worthy to be compared in grandeur of design with St. Peter's Church at Rome. He rebuilt numerous City churches, whose spires and pinnacles still stand out white against the sky; and he set for future generations a model which has availed to make the capital among the noblest cities of the world. Since Wren's day London has multiplied some nine or ten times over; but even in 1666 it was already in a remarkable degree the hub and mainspring of the nation's life. It was fifteen times the size of the second city in the kingdom. Its population bordered close on half a million. With its Lord Mayor and Corporation, its train-bands and its corps of civil watchmen, it formed, as it were, a little kingdom by itself; and the rough vigour and bustle of its life was the wonder and bewilderment of foreign visitors, who in their own country were little used to the freedom of manners and liberty of speech that they found there. The "tumultuous rush" with which the Parliamentary members moved into the House, the insolent repartee of coach-drivers and boatmen, even the behaviour of the very urchins in the street, shocked the staid Frenchmen of King Louis' Court out of the five senses. London, in fact, was astir with something of which Frenchmen as yet knew nothing, the inextinguishable spirit of democracy; and often in the political struggles of the coming years the voice of the whole remaining country was barely sufficient to weigh down the balance against the lively and forceful demonstrations of the London mob. Yet on the whole, for many days to come, it was that other voice which won the

day—the voice of the Royalist-Tory-Conservative Squire—who with the Restoration of King Charles II came back into his own again.¹

CHAPTER XV

CHARLES II

Charles's Apprenticeship.—Charles, who had a sense of humour, must have chuckled inwardly at the mad enthusiasm which greeted his home-coming to the capital on the 27th of May, 1660; but he must have chuckled still more when in the following May the first election of his reign was held. The mood of crazy loyalty showed no abatement; the Cavalier who could display some scar got from a Roundhead broadsword in the wars was still the hero of the hour; and when the representatives turned up at Westminster they were indeed a set of men after the King's own heart, a Royalist assembly out and out. Charles knew a good thing when he saw one, and he stuck to that Parliament for eighteen years, shrewdly aware that, if he once dissolved it, he would never get such another Parliament again. Idle, dissolute young roué as he was, it suited him down to the ground to leave these faithful henchmen to govern in his interest while he himself was free to talk scandal and play tennis, breed spaniels or make love amid the gay whirl of Court frivolity. He lay abed when the council-chamber called for him, went off, so they say, collecting butterflies when the Dutch fleet was sailing up the Thames; and established, in short, the reputation—by no means displeasing to those who remembered his father's strait-laced meddling ways—of being a thoroughgoing sportsman and an easy-going King. Had this been the real man, Charles's reign would not have been nearly the most disastrous and certainly among the most interesting of English history. But there was behind the mask that which would have appalled (had they but known it) even the most thoughtless of his riotous companions. It peeps out sometimes in his portraits; and under the handsome, somewhat saturnine features of his pale, sensuous face, we can detect an uncanny hint of that calculated cunning which played deliberately the highest hazards, with the liberty of England as the stake. The great treason failed: and the full extent of it was never known; but enough was known to alienate the best of his supporters, and Charles lost even his Royalist Parliament's good-will. After the first period of his seeming innocence and this second period of his half-suspected villainy, there followed a third period in which Charles's misdeeds came home to roost. The people looked at him askance; new Parliaments bullied him; old friends became the bitterest of his foes. But such was the amazing cleverness of the man, that by readjusting

¹ For the state of England at the time of the Restoration no better authority can be consulted than the inimitable third chapter of Macaulay's "History," upon which much of the foregoing sketch is based.

his tactics without changing his ideals he yet won the country round. This was the fourth and final phase, and Charles ended his long reign, which he would, if he could, have turned into a tyranny, impenitent, but not unpopular.

That Charles, during the opening years of his reign, appeared so indifferent to politics was no mere accident. Driven into exile by his father's death at the age of seventeen, he had spent all his early manhood upon foreign soil. On his return, therefore, he was a complete stranger to English ways and methods; and he was wisely content to watch and wait inactive, until he imagined that he knew the ropes. Throughout this term of his apprenticeship the control of affairs was left to his chief minister, Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon. That staid old lawyer, once member of the Long Parliament, but an early deserter to the King, had followed his young master into exile and there assisted and restrained him with much good advice. The Restoration brought him at once his reward and his opportunity. Clarendon's ideal had always been a loyal co-operation between Parliament and sovereign; and if ever it were possible for the two to work together it was now, when the crowd of Royalist members at Westminster were tumbling over one another in their impatient zeal.

Clarendon Code.—Backed by these eager partisans, Clarendon undertook the first important task of the reign, the task of re-establishing the Established English Church. No broad-minded desire for toleration marked this part of the Restoration settlement. There was to be but one religion for all England; no room was to be left for Puritan dissent; and the persecuting energy of Laud, so rudely interrupted by the Revolution, was now resumed with an alacrity not unmixed with the spirit of revenge. The new order of things was established and defined by four sweeping acts of repressive legislation. By one, the Puritan ministers, short of attesting their "Uniformity" on oath, were swept from the vicarages and rectories where, under the Commonwealth, they had been so comfortably ensconced. By another, both they and any schoolmaster holding Puritan opinions were prohibited from coming within "five miles" of any town. By a third, no Nonconformist gathering or "conventicle" was to be held on pain of imprisonment or transportation. And, finally, by a fourth, no person might become the member of a "corporation" or town council unless he first took the sacrament according to the rites of the Established Church.

These Acts—the Act of Uniformity, the Five-mile Act, the Conventicle Act, and the Corporation Act—were all passed through Parliament between '61 and '65; and this whip of four tails, prepared by Clarendon to bring the Puritans to heel, and known, after his name, as the Clarendon Code, was not intended as an idle threat.¹ It was used remorselessly. Sudden raids descended upon midnight meetings held

¹ As a matter of fact, the extreme rigour of the code was dictated less by the taste of Clarendon himself than by the desire of the 'Cavalier' Parliament to be revenged on its Puritan enemies.

with darkened windows in back-parlours; ministers straying "out of bounds" were haled off to the Justice of the Peace and summarily condemned to prison; and the hideous accommodation of the gaols was soon packed to overflowing. The inevitable result of this brutal persecution was merely to increase the numbers and the zeal of the Dissenters. Some, indeed, preferred to quit the country, and the flow of colonists to North America began afresh. The majority, however, still hung on, hoping for better days, and not without just cause. With the rights of a free Parliament restored England was now a self-governing community, as she had never been under King Charles I. What one Parliament had done another Parliament could undo. Therein lay hope; and, as time proved, religious toleration was among the first-fruits of democracy.

The Dutch War.—Clarendon survived the unpopularity created by these measures, for which he was certainly responsible, only to fall by reason of a war, for which he undoubtedly was not. The Dutch, still smarting under the Navigation Act, had by now recovered from their late discomfiture and were openly spoiling for a fight. Friction between their colonists and the English in India, Africa, and America provided manifold excuses; and in 1665 a rabid war-party in Parliament pushed Charles and his reluctant minister over the edge. The fortune of the fighting was as various as it had been ten years before. Blake's successors, Rupert, George Monk, and Prince James, the future king, were once again inferior to de Ruyter and Tromp's son. But the fleet manœuvred well and pluckily; and in a famous battle fought off Lowestoft they blew up the enemy's flagship and put the rest to flight with heavy loss. Success, however, was not always on the English side; and the tremendous strain of the Plague and the Great Fire, which devastated London in two successive years, told heavily upon the country's spirit. In 1667 parleys were begun, and the English fleet was most imprudently laid up in dock. Presently a hitch occurred in the negotiations; and thinking, not without reason, that they would catch the English napping, the Dutch sprang a surprise attack upon the Thames. Their captains knew the soundings to a fathom, and sailed straight up unmolested past the Nore, burst the boom into the Medway and bombarded Chatham and destroyed eight men-of-war, while the crews were scuttling off ashore to save their skins. The thunder of the guns threw all London into a panic. The train-bands were called out. Men packed off their wives and families into the country and ran about spreading exaggerated tales, and debating whether the Tower of London could be held.

Meanwhile the Dutch ships departed almost as suddenly as they had come, shaking off with ease the tardy and inadequate pursuit. This impudent surprise—"a dreadful spectacle," says Evelyn in his diary, "as ever Englishmen saw and a dishonour never to be wiped out"—determined the Government upon a weak and speedy peace, and a settlement was made. Then indignation was let loose; and the man who had to bear the brunt of it was, of course, the Earl of Clarendon. The King was not sorry to make a scapegoat of his minister. He was tired of

Clarendon's pomposity, bored by his solemn moral lectures and diatribes on vice; and when, in the autumn of '67, the old man surrendered the Great Seal and retired to write his history of the Great Rebellion, an exile on French soil, Charles recognised the truth of some courtier's fulsome compliment, that "this was the first time His Majesty could ever truly be called King of England."

Clarendon's fall was indeed a turning-point in Charles's career. He was beginning to feel his feet in English politics; behind his indolent exterior he was setting those subtle wits to work; and, once released from the great earl's leading-strings, he ventured to embark on those sinister intrigues which came so near to bringing England (and himself) to utter shipwreck. His first step was to choose a ministry which he could manage as he liked; and here he showed himself at once a master of diplomacy. Instead of choosing men of one and the same colour, he selected five who were sure to disagree, and of whose disagreement he himself might make a stepping-stone to power. Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham,¹ Ashley (better known to us as Shaftesbury) and Lauderdale were the names of the new five; their initial letters spell, as will be noticed, the mystic word Cabal; and by that title they were always known. More important, however, was the fact that the first two of them were Catholics, while the other three were not. Therein lay the key to the future use which Charles was to make of his new tools.

Louis XIV and the Dover Plot.—Before we unfold the purpose now beginning to take shape in Charles's mind, it is necessary, however, to look back upon the influences under which his youth and early manhood had been thrown. From the very first France had cast her spell over his mind. Much of his exile had been spent in France; his mother, Henrietta Maria, was herself a Frenchwoman; and above all, by virtue of that same connection, he was first cousin to Louis XIV, who sat on the French throne. France under Louis stood at the zenith of her fortunes. Richelieu's ingenious scheme to cripple Austria by prolonging and supporting the German Protestants' revolt had been taken up in turn and carried through by Cardinal Mazarin, his successor; and Louis, coming of age to rule soon after Mazarin's death, inherited the fruit of these two great statesmen's labours. Himself one of the most remarkable rulers of all time, a prodigious worker and a commanding personality, he found France dominant in Europe; he strove to make her dominant in the world; and, above all, he contrived, after the fashion of the ancient Roman Emperors, to concentrate the whole of her enormous power in his own hands. "The State," he said in his famous epigram, "I am the State." A despot of despots, and a Catholic of the Catholics, he was the most complete embodiment of that absolute monarchy towards

¹ Buckingham is depicted in Dryden's poem, "Absalom and Achitophel," under the guise of Zimri:

"Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was Everything by starts, and Nothing long;
But in the course of one revolving Moon,
Was Chymist, Fidler, States-man, and Buffoon."

which, in his own muddle-headed way, King Charles I had striven; and can it be wondered if the example of Louis' magnificence exercised a fatal fascination over the mind of Charles's cleverer son. Charles II, however, saw quite clearly what his father never did—that, if he was to create himself a despot of this type, two things were necessary. First, he would need the aid of *foreign troops* in England to overcome the national resistance. Second, he must himself adopt and then generally enforce the *Roman Catholic creed*, “the only religion,” as he put it, “proper for a king.” A Protestant despot was indeed a mere contradiction in terms.

Three years after the fall of Clarendon this dream took concrete shape; and Charles embarked upon a scheme at once so diabolical and so ingenious that none of his contemporaries did more than guess at it, and the true story remained a secret until a full century had passed. In 1670 a private and unpublished compact was arranged between himself and his cousin, the French King. Unknown to anyone in England except the two Catholic ministers, Arlington and Clifford, a secret treaty was drawn up and signed at Dover; and its terms were these: at a “convenient opportunity” Charles was to declare himself a Catholic; Louis was to lend him troops and a large sum of money; and England was thus to be enslaved to Charles, if necessary, by force of arms. That was one side of the bargain; but a preliminary condition was imposed. Louis' ambitions had of late been turning towards the conquest of the neighbouring Netherlands. Part of the southern states, which still belonged to Spain, he had already filched, and his further progress had only been checked by the stalwart opposition of the Dutch, supported, strange as it may seem, by a promise of English help.

Louis was now determined to complete his purpose and conquer the whole Netherlands, Dutch provinces and all; and he engaged Charles by the secret Dover Treaty to assist him in this criminal design. For two years Louis prepared the great attack; and in '72 it was at last delivered by the foremost French generals of the age. Yet heavy as was the blow, it was met and countered. William, Prince of Orange, the young Dutch Stadtholder, and one day destined for the English throne, roused the Dutch nation to an obstinate defence. The dykes were opened and the country flooded. The Dutchmen fought by land and sea with the courage of despair; and with the aid of Spain and Austria, France's old enemies, they so far proved successful that in 1678 Louis was forced to abandon his attempt. In all this, however, beyond some half-hearted naval fighting and the despatch of a few regiments to France, England had taken little part. The hopes held out at Dover had proved false. Charles, it is true, had done his best: he had squared his three Protestant ministers by showing them a bogus treaty, mentioning the French alliance, but silent on the rest. So far so good; but he had reckoned without Parliament. Despite the painful memory of the Medway incident, its members were not enthusiastic for a war against the Dutch; on the other hand, they were very definitely hostile to alliance with the Catholic

power of France. The fact was, that apart from this old prejudice the progress of the plot was proving anything but smooth, and Charles's subjects were beginning to smell a rat.

Failure of the Plot.—It was partly, perhaps, his ignorance of English character that led so quick-witted a man as Charles to fancy that his outrageous scheme could ever really work. At any rate, he found himself checkmated almost from the start, notwithstanding that he laid his plans like the cunning player that he was. There was to be no hurry or impatience; his policy was "slow but sure"; and in order to prepare for the grand climax, when he should openly declare for the Roman Catholic faith, he began by putting out a cautious feeler. In the same year that Louis was launching his attack upon the Dutch, Charles suddenly came out as an ardent enthusiast for religious toleration. Harking back upon the crown's old claim to dispense and alter laws in individual cases, he issued a Declaration of Indulgence to all proscribed and persecuted sects. The real object of this move was, of course, to set free the Catholics; but Charles also reckoned on a rise in public favour, when Puritan as well as Catholic prisoners were released from the State gaols. To his intense astonishment, the very opposite resulted. The nation rose as one man; the cry of "No Popery" was sounded; even the Puritans refused the proffered boon, if their own liberty involved the liberty of Catholics too. Parliament spoke its mind in no uncertain voice. When the choice was forced upon them, its members were better Englishmen than they were Royalists, and they at once drove Charles to take the hateful measure back. Then, almost before the bonfires had died down which announced the King's surrender, the enraged Parliament proceeded to strike a counter-blow. An Act was introduced to expel all Catholics from the service of the crown. No man, according to its terms, might henceforth hold or enter any office until as a "test" he had first partaken of the sacrament according to the rites of the Established English Church. The "Test Act" was indeed a bolt out of the blue; it unseated the two Catholic ministers, Arlington and Clifford; it dissolved the whole cabal, and thus incidentally led to the withdrawal from the war against the Dutch. It shook the credit even of the King. No wonder Louis was annoyed. No wonder Charles lay low. The whole grand plot had definitely and ignominiously collapsed; but its collapse was not the end. Retribution was presently to follow, slow-footed but sure. The third period of the reign had now begun.

Shaftesbury and Titus Oates.—Among the members of the extinct cabal, not the least able and resourceful was Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury. He was a deep and learned thinker, vastly ahead of the spirit of the age, and one who not only believed in liberty and toleration, but who made it his life's aim to establish them in England. It was an ill day for Charles when this man gleaned (possibly from the lips of Arlington himself) some hint of the dark secret of the Dover plot. From that day out Shaftesbury set himself to organise with an effective opposition all those who stood on the side of liberty and against the foul

machinations of the King.¹ A political club known as the Green Ribbon was founded on his suggestion; and at the club's headquarters, in Chancery Lane End, schemes were debated for opposing and punishing the Catholics; and meanwhile from behind the scenes its leaders were egging on the mob to burn the Pope in effigy and sing insulting songs against the King. The idea caught on in the country. Its success outran all expectations. Liberal-minded conformers no less than thorough-paced dissenters soon rallied to the cry; and thus, under Shaftesbury's lead, was formed the party which one day not far hence was to adopt the historic name of Whigs. In the Royalist atmosphere of Parliament, however, little could be done. A fresh election was Shaftesbury's only hope; but in his impatient effort to force a dissolution he committed a false step which drew down on him the anger of the House, and was at once clapped into the Tower. He was not kept there many months; but the deed had been done; Shaftesbury's spirit was aroused, and he had not long to wait for his revenge.

One of the men on whom suspicion fell when the Test Act was enforced was the King's own brother, James, the Duke of York; and he thereby had been compelled to abandon his command over the fleet. There was little doubt that James was indeed a Papist, and he did not take much pains to hide the fact. He would have done better to have been more wary, as the sequel showed. On 28th April of 1678 there met in the Duke's rooms at St. James's Palace a party of English Jesuits. What passed behind those walls remains a secret; but in the autumn of that year a man came forward who pretended that he knew. Titus Oates, perhaps the most notorious of all historical informers, was himself a Roman Catholic, a man of vile repute, and an unconscionable liar. He did not, in fact, know much, he did not even know where the Jesuits' meeting had been held; but what he pretended that he knew was more than enough to set England in an uproar. In a written declaration which he put into the keeping of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, a London magistrate, Oates told of the existence of a secret Catholic plot to murder Charles, and (if he refused to join them) James as well.

¹ Shaftesbury's character is depicted in Dryden's poem, "Absalom and Achitophel," under the thin disguise of the latter:

"Of these the false Achitophel was first:
 A Name to all succeeding ages curst.
 For close Designs, and crooked Counsels fit;
 Sagacious, Bold and Turbulent of wit.
 A fiery Soul, which working out its way,
 Fretted the Pigmy-Body to decay.
 Great Wits are sure to Madness near alli'd;
 And thin Partitions do their Bounds divide:
 Else why should he with Wealth and Honour blest,
 Refuse his Age the needful hours of Rest?
 Punish a Body which he could not please;
 Bankrupt of Life, yet Prodigal of Ease?
 And all to leave, what with his toil he won
 To that unfeather'd, two-legg'd Thing, a Son.
 In Friendship false, implacable in Hate:
 Resolv'd to Ruine or to Rule the State."

There was, of course, a panic. Since the excitements of the Fire and the Dutch Fleet, London's nerves were all on edge. Oates was brought before the King and cross-examined, and detected more than once in palpable untruths. Seeking to justify himself, he drew a bow at a venture and declared that amongst those privy to the plot was the Duke of York's own secretary. The secretary's rooms were searched, and up the chimney a box was there discovered containing treasonable documents. The fat was now fairly on the fire. London hummed with excitement; and, somewhat unreasonably perhaps, considering Oates' original version of the plot, the public fury turned upon the Duke of York himself.

Then on a sudden the mystery thickened. Godfrey, the magistrate who had Oates's declaration, disappeared, and a few days later was discovered dead in a ditch on Primrose Hill, with marks of strangling round his neck and a sword deep in his heart. All jumped at the conclusion that the Catholics were responsible, and the popular excitement was tenfold increased. Godfrey's body was laid out for exhibition in the public street, and for two days a queue of fervid Protestants filed past, vowing vengeance to the skies. Here at last was the opportunity for which Shaftesbury had been waiting. He and his new party took up the cry against the Papists; and when the first impulse of excitement began to die away, they worked it up again. What is more, they carried the crusade into Parliament itself. There they suggested dangers which made even the stoutest among Royalists quail: pointed to the undisbanded army raised for the Dutch war, hinted at what use the King himself might make of it (had they but known the truth!) and at last, by these and such-like inflammatory suggestions, procured the fall of Charles's new minister, Danby, and the final dissolution of the Royalist Parliament, which had sat for eighteen years. Shaftesbury's victory seemed complete.

Whig Victory and Collapse.—The election which followed was a greater triumph still. The new Whig party swept the country, and Shaftesbury appeared to have the game entirely in his hands. But when Charles's fighting spirit was properly aroused he was more than a match for the best wits of his opponents. The crisis of his unpopularity was passed; and in the six years remaining of his life he contrived to outplay Shaftesbury and to bring the country round to his own side once more.

In this fourth and final phase of Charles's reign the point over which the fiercest struggle raged was the question of the succession to the throne. Charles had no rightful son. His natural heir was therefore James, his brother; but there was another claimant in the offing—James Crofts, created Duke of Monmouth, a son born out of wedlock to the King. Now Monmouth was at least a Protestant, and the Whigs were naturally supporters of his claim, being, as they were, most doggedly determined that Catholic James, at any rate, should never mount the throne. Shaftesbury bent all his efforts to secure the settlement for

Monmouth, and he left no stone unturned. He took up a foolish story that Charles had, in fact, been married properly to Monmouth's mother, and talked knowingly of a mysterious black box containing the certificate of marriage—which nobody, however, had positively seen. A more practical step was to introduce in Parliament a Bill excluding James from the succession. The Exclusion Bill so called was passed through the House of Commons, but was rejected by the Lords, to the intense annoyance of the Whigs. Charles meanwhile was playing his opponents much as, it has been said, a clever angler plays a heavy fish. He let out line and gave the Whigs their heads. He allowed their vengeance on the Catholics whom Oates and others had denounced to run its brutal course (bringing to the scaffold some thirty men in all, among them the venerable Viscount Stafford). He allowed them to pass the famous Habeas Corpus Act, which prohibited the prolonged detention of suspected prisoners without a proper trial (and which, in point of fact, only passed the House of Lords because the tellers¹ for a joke counted a fat peer as ten and afterwards forgot to put their figures right). Charles even went so far as to banish both James and Monmouth from the country. But a line had somewhere to be drawn, and on one point Charles was firm. He would neither recognise Monmouth as his heir nor would he exclude James, his brother, from the throne. Next year a new Whig Parliament produced another Bill of Exclusion like the last, and the House of Lords again rejected it. The Whigs' fury was redoubled, and an ugly feeling grew. But the wary Charles knew what he was doing. He well understood the meaning of the proverb, "Give a fool enough rope and he will hang himself." He saw too the Whig leaders now acting like fools. He had only to manœuvre and gain time; and the angrier and more violent they became, the less real trouble was likely to result. In '81 there was a fresh election, and a third Whig Parliament was returned.

Then Charles played his master-stroke. He summoned them to meet at Oxford, where no unruly mob of Londoners could interfere. There, while the Whigs were busily engaged preparing a new Exclusion Bill for James, and feeling quite confident of victory at last, he appeared before them and told them they might quit. He had timed the dissolution to a nicety. For a moment the astonished House spluttered with indignation, talked big of insurrection, then hurried home on their horses or their coaches and—did nothing. Nor did the people. There was not a soul in England who desired to see the civil war reopened simply to help a lot of talkative Whig gentlemen to oust an inoffensive fool like James from his inheritance. The Whigs' outcry fell miserably flat.

It was now the turn of Charles to take revenge. He was in a strong position, for he now had a source of income of which Parliament knew nothing. King Louis, for his own private purposes, had promised to finance him; and Charles, relieved of the necessity of demanding fur-

¹ One of the tellers, according to the story, was "subject to the vapours," and failed to observe the other's error.



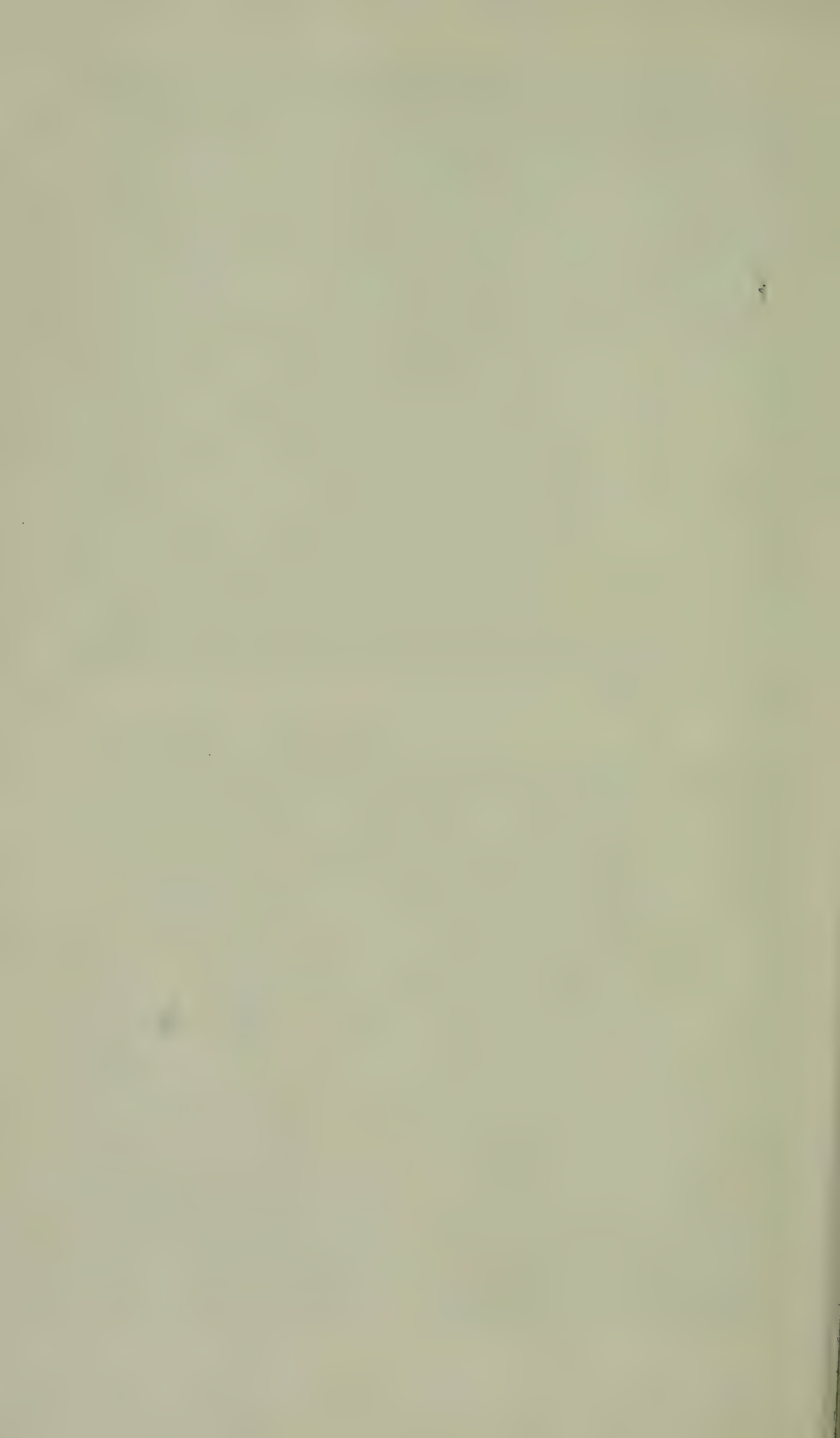
ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

From the painting by Greenhill



JOHN BUNYAN

From the painting by Sadler



ther taxes, summoned no more Parliaments to Westminster—or Oxford. For the last four years of his life he ruled alone. The Whigs, unable to keep up the fight in a constitutional manner, had recourse to other means, and in so doing played straight into his hands. No sooner had they recovered from their surprise at Oxford than they began to lay their heads together and concoct all sorts of schemes for killing Charles. Of these the most notorious was the Rye House Plot, by which it was intended to waylay the royal coach on the road from the Newmarket races. An accident occurred, however, and the murderers missed the coach. Charles, too, was on his guard, and his officers unravelled many clues. The net result of all this futile violence was that Shaftesbury was compelled to flee the country, which did not miss him much, and that Charles attained a spurious popularity invariably afforded to a threatened King.

During his closing days he was free once more to saunter at his ease and crack his careless jokes. In a way which he never had intended he had attained the ambition of his life. He was now as absolute a monarch as he was ever like to be, not indeed by the aid of Louis' musketeers, but through the doles from Louis' purse; not as a Catholic monarch of a Catholic country, but (strange irony of fate) as the Protestant champion of loyal Englishmen against the treasonable agitation of a set of factious Whigs. Yet even so, Charles duped the very men who backed him, as he always did. For he took the sacrament upon his death-bed from a Roman Catholic priest. An actor to the end, he apologised to those who gathered round him for the inconvenient prolongation of his mysterious malady: "I am afraid, gentlemen, that I am an unconscionable time a-dying." No doubt the fulsome protests in reply were such as he expected and desired; yet for once in his life perhaps, Charles spoke the sober truth.

CHAPTER XVI

JAMES II

The world in general is always more ready to excuse a knave than to tolerate a fool—and Englishmen are no exception. After having borne patiently for five and twenty years with the incredible duplicity of Charles, they grew tired of his blundering brother in just four. It is odd that one who in managing the fleet had displayed such marked ability should have made so incapable a King; but the fact remains that James II was a fool; and among many types of fool his was perhaps the worst—the solemn prig. A spark of common geniality or a saving sense of humour might have given him some slight insight into other minds or exposed to him the shortcomings of his own. But, although a man of fifty-three when he assumed the crown, James had learnt nothing whatsoever out of life. The terrible warning of the Great Rebellion

stared him in the face, yet he behaved as though it had not been; and he showed all the stubborn obstinacy of his father, Charles I, without a tithe of Charles's excuse. Like all the Stuarts, he loved to play the tyrant and to exert his authority in trifles, so that once he actually forbade the bonfires upon Guy Fawkes' Day, because Guy Fawkes, like himself, was a Catholic. But, unlike the other Stuarts, he was utterly devoid of pluck, and when at the crisis of his reign a little moral courage might still have saved his crown, he put his tail between his legs and ran away. Yet this was the man who believed he could succeed where Charles, his brother, with twenty times his wits, had definitely failed. Not content to inherit England as his loyal and humble servant, he tried to render her his Catholic slave; and, what is more, he chose deliberately to try it without the help of France. So true is it that, where knaves or angels falter, the fool will rush blindly in.

Monmouth's Rebellion.—James, as we have already had good reason to see, was a Catholic by religion; and his first business upon ascending the throne was to deal with the Protestant claimant, James Crofts, Duke of Monmouth, his brother's bastard son. Charles II had died in February of '85, and in June Monmouth landed at Lyme Regis on the Dorset coast with eighty-three companions. It was a mad adventure from the start. He proclaimed himself king at Taunton; the district was one where he was known; and the peasants of Somerset and Devon flocked to his standard. Nothing in the whole story of the rising is more remarkable than the enthusiasm displayed by these poor country labourers, a class which had remained comparatively indifferent throughout the civil wars, and yet which now came out to fight in their thousands for the anti-Catholic cause. The rest of England looked on unmoved; few of the gentry joined them; and they were mostly armed with scythes. Yet, when the day of their defeat arrived, this mob of unwarlike peasants fought and went down like men. The issue could hardly have been otherwise; not more than some five thousand had been gathered, when against them came a royal army marching, well-trained, well-equipped, and with John Churchill, the future strategist of Ramillies and Blenheim, as second-in-command.

It was at Sedgemoor, in North Somerset, a wild expanse of marsh-land reclaimed some time or other from the sea, that Monmouth chose to make his stand. Attacking through the dark, some hours before the dawn, his rustics found themselves checked by a deep ditch, and thus failed to effect what might have been for the Royalists an uncomfortable surprise. Their leader took horse for the hills at the first sign of their discomfiture; but the men themselves stood their ground unflinchingly, until the enemy's cannon had wrought such havoc in their ranks, that with the breaking dawn the survivors realised their plight and sought safety where they could. Monmouth himself was captured two days later, hiding under a hay-cock and disguised in a shepherd's clothes. His fate was, of course, the scaffold; and richly he deserved it. But the punishment inflicted on his unhappy dupes has become a byword for

sanguinary vengeance. It had long since been the recognised tradition, honourably observed by both parties in the civil war, that only the actual leader should suffer the penalty of treason, and that quarter should be given to the rest. Such, however, was not James's intention. In the autumn of that year Lord-Justice Jeffreys, the most brutal judge who ever sat upon the bench, went down on circuit to the West Country. As the miserable survivors of Sedgemoor were brought before him, he gibed at their appearance, drank wine and cut ribald jokes as he delivered sentence, and then laughed to see their legs "a-dancing," as the hangman strung them up by scores. Upwards of a thousand were sent out as slaves to the Barbadoes; but three hundred at least were put to death; and their carcasses were hung along the roadways or town squares to advertise to others the warning of their fate. Yet Jeffreys' most abominable brutalities were reserved not for men, but for the gentler sex. One kindly soul of a woman, who had harboured refugees after the battle, was by his orders burned alive. Another, Alice Lisle, member of a well-known Hampshire family, had also taken in two fugitives without knowing what they were. She had informed the authorities as soon as she discovered; but meanwhile allowed the two fellows to escape. She was brought for trial before Jeffreys. Twice the jury refused to find her guilty; but Jeffreys bullied them until they did. He then condemned Alice Lisle also to be burned alive; and the incredible sentence was only commuted into execution by the intervention of the King. This act is not enough to whitewash James. It must be supposed that he had given Jeffreys his instructions, and that he intended by such measures to teach England what it meant to cross his will. It was the policy of a weak man wishing to seem strong.

James's Catholic Schemes.—James now proceeded without more ado to the task which was the main ambition of his life. The nation had not unnaturally imagined that whatever were the new King's private prejudices, he would at least keep his religion to himself. But James thought otherwise, and from the first he set himself deliberately to undo the Reformation. He had carefully ensured that the Parliament he summoned should contain none but orthodox High Churchmen, whom he supposed in his fatuity to be but narrowly divided from the Catholic creed; and he promised himself that, partly by persuasion, partly by show of force, he would easily win them altogether round to Rome. The means to organise some show of force a kindly fate had already placed at his disposal. His brother Charles had contrived during his long reign to create a standing army, being, in fact, the first of English sovereigns to possess one. Many of the most famous regiments—the Coldstreams, Life Guards, Grenadiers and Buffs—date their formation from his reign; and they were the foundation of the modern Regulars. The danger of Monmouth's rising had, however, given James a golden opportunity of adding to this army; and he lost no time in increasing it five-fold—from six to thirty thousand. Greatly as men objected to placing such a military force at the disposal of the King, they were quite unable

to prevent it; and throughout the next four years the terror of this powerful threat to English liberty loomed large behind the tyrannies of James. The soldiers thus raised were of the most undesirable description, drawn from the scum of the people, and freely given to murder and rapine, a constant plague to peaceable civilians. Yet there was worse than this. James saw to it that numerous commissions in his army were distributed to Catholics. Jesuit priests were openly admitted to the lines; and in the great camp on Hounslow Heath, near London, a wooden Catholic chapel was actually erected. James was moving fast; and with this powerful weapon of intimidation at his elbow he felt courage to proceed with his main plan.

The chief obstacle which stood across his path was naturally the Test Act—the Law passed by Parliament just before the Popish Plot—barring admittance to any public office against all but true members of the Established Church, and against Roman Catholics in particular. James soon asserted his right to override the Test Act, by using the well-worn argument that laws could be dispensed or actually suspended by the sovereign's special grace. To this prerogative James clung through thick and thin. When his Parliament protested, he dissolved it, and never called another. When judges refused to uphold him in the courts, he turned them off the bench and substituted more pliant individuals. Having thus cleared his way of every obstacle, he began to do with civil offices what he had done already in his army. Catholics were promoted right and left; and when none were actually available, persons of lax religious principle did duty in their stead. The Earl of Sunderland, whose "conversion" was impending, was made Chief Minister; Jeffreys, who was not a man to make bones about religion, became Lord Chancellor. In short, every important post was filled by men who were by conviction or by interest in sympathy with Rome. Nor did the plague stop there. James had, as was natural, a special eye upon the Established Church, and a systematic purging of inconvenient persons was begun. Bishops were suspended for preaching sermons against the Pope, and replaced by other ecclesiastics of more dubious tendencies. At Oxford there was not even the least attempt to disguise the anti-Protestant campaign. James carried the place by storm. He appointed three declared Papists as the heads of colleges. The Fellows of Magdalen, who ventured to repudiate the royal nominee and elect another of their own, were turned out neck and crop from their positions; and the College was made over to the Catholics as a training-school for priests.

Such acts were not lost upon the disgusted nation; and can it indeed be wondered that the ascendancy which Charles had so laboriously built up in five and twenty years was lost by this fool of a brother in as many months? By 1687 James had alienated every class and every sect in England, outside the tiny Catholic group on which he doted. The High Church party, from which he originally had hopes, was now up in arms against him. The Royalist squires who had rallied round his brother to defend the crown against the revolutionary schemes of

bourgeois Whigs were now beginning to make common cause with their old enemies. James was, in fact, without a friend. Now not even a despot can maintain his power for long unless he commands the support of some element in the State; and, blind as he was, James began to realise that his policy was leading him to headlong ruin. He saw that he must at all costs purchase support somewhere; and that is why in this year of 1687 he suddenly began to change his tack.

The Declaration of Indulgence.—Towards the Puritan dissenters James had hitherto behaved precisely as we should expect of him. As the extreme wing of Protestant Reformers, he regarded them naturally enough as an even more dangerous foe than the Established Church; and he had done his level best to crush them. He had begun by meting out the severest punishment to those who in the previous reign had been most responsible for the outcry against Popery. Oates himself, the author of the scare, had been sentenced to be flogged through the streets of London to the tune of 3400 lashes in three days—a sentence doubtless intended to prove fatal, but which the hardy victim somehow managed to survive. Next, James turned his attention to the rank and file of the Nonconformist sects. The Clarendon Code was still in force, prohibiting their meetings and excluding their ministers from entry to the towns, where of course their chief strength lay. James saw to it that the letter of the law was rigorously upheld. Fines and imprisonments were dealt out broadcast. In Scotland Presbyterians of both sexes lost their lives; and for two years the persecution pursued its savage course. Yet much as these folk had suffered from the King's hostility, they were about to encounter a still sterner test of faith—the treacherous offer of his friendship was now to come.

Among many rogues who shared the sovereign's confidence, there was, as it so happened, a single honest man, William Penn, the Quaker. Penn was a broad-minded and enlightened thinker, and he was never tired of urging upon James a policy of Toleration for all sects. His advice had a strange sequel; for at length the bright idea broke upon James's mind that here was the very opportunity he wanted for winning some support. He saw that by reviving his predecessor's scheme of offering Indulgences all round he might, as it were, kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, the relaxation of the Clarendon Code would bring him into favour with the Nonconformists, and so win him the support he so much needed. On the other hand, the abolition of the Test Act would recover complete freedom for his Catholic friends. The ruse would have done some credit to James's sagacity but for the patent circumstance that Charles had already tried the plan and failed. But James could never learn from past experience, and he went recklessly ahead. At first the scheme promised extremely well. A new Declaration of Indulgence was announced. The Puritan dissenters were once more released from prison; and finding themselves, almost for the first time since the Restoration, free to gather and worship as they chose, they not unnaturally were grateful to the author of this boon. James,

however, did not understand the art of leaving well alone. He spoilt everything he did by overdoing it; and in the following year he re-issued the Declaration, emphasising the withdrawal of the Test Act and announcing the readmittance of the Catholics into public life; and, as though to rub it in, he ordered the Declaration to be read aloud in every parish church throughout the land. Then the storm burst. The entire country—irrespective of all differences of class and creed—was united as one man against the monstrous scandal of this wholesale concession to the hated sect. Only four parsons in the whole of London ventured to read the Declaration from the pulpit. The Mayor of Scarborough, whose zeal outran his discretion, was ignominiously captured by the mob and tossed in a blanket. Even the Dissenters indignantly declared that persecution itself was preferable to the enjoyment of liberty at such a cost. If Indulgence meant Indulgence to the Catholics, the less heard of it the better. James had indeed put his hand into a hornets' nest.

Bishops' Trial and James's New Heir.—In those days newspapers were few and little read; Parliament, as we have seen, had been suspended; and there was no other organised medium for national expression. Nevertheless the universal anger found a voice in the protest which seven bishops, bolder than the rest, presented to the King. Their arguments were moderate and their words restrained; but James was in no mood for argument. His blood was up, and he ordered the seven bishops to be committed to the Tower and tried under the law against seditious libel. The country hung breathlessly upon the issue of the trial. Had the verdict gone for James, there is no saying but that England would have been plunged back in civil war. The men of the southwest were particularly concerned for the safety of John Trelawney, the popular bishop of Bristol, and their mood of bold defiance was caught in the well-known song's refrain:

. . . . And shall Trelawney die,
Not but ten thousand Cornish boys shall know the reason why.

The trial was on the 29th of June. The court sat all day from ten o'clock till six, and the jury then retired to consider their verdict. Eleven out of the twelve were agreed for an acquittal, but the twelfth, a fat Court brewer, who set more store by his royal customer's goodwill than by his juror's oath, stood out for voting "guilty." Since by English law a jury's vote is bound to be unanimous, the twelve were locked up till such a time as they might settle their dispute. All night the stubborn brewer held his ground; but by nine o'clock next morning his resolve at last gave way, and a unanimous verdict of "not guilty" was returned. As the liberated bishops left the court, crowds knelt at the roadside to receive their blessing. The excitement spread like wild-fire. Beacons were lighted up and down the country; and even James's own army upon Hounslow Heath cheered lustily at the good news.

But the acquittal of the bishops was not sufficient to save James.

Three weeks before, on the very day that the bishops had been taken to the Tower, something had happened which was giving his enemies most furiously to think, and which, the more they thought on it, worked their excited minds into a mood of flat rebellion. *James's wife had borne him a son.* Such an event had been so little expected that the sceptical declared the whole business was a hoax; and a story was put about which gained much credence, to the effect that another woman's baby had been surreptitiously procured and smuggled into the royal apartment in a warming-pan. The wish was doubtless father to the thought, and the rumour had no sound evidence to back it. Few question now that the child who was thus ushered upon an ungrateful world, and who lived to adorn history as the Old Pretender, was in fact the Queen's own son. Be that as it may, one point was beyond dispute: James could now claim that he possessed an heir. That fact was final, and it shattered at a blow the last fond hope to which his subjects clung—that their troubles would all end with James's death. This was now most improbable. The Catholic father would breed up a Catholic son; he would bequeath his character and his ambitions together with his crown; and the iron yoke which for just on ninety years the Stuart dynasty had assiduously been forging would now be riveted for ever upon English necks. The patience of the people was by no means inexhaustible, and this was the last straw. On the evening of the day on which the seven bishops were acquitted some half-dozen of the chief Whig leaders drew up and despatched to Holland a letter which was destined to unseat King James and alter the whole course of English history.

Louis XIV and William of Orange.—Before, however, we can discuss the contents of that letter, or understand the motives which inspired it, we must glance once more at the main field of continental politics. It was now ten years since Louis XIV had been foiled in his great attack upon the Netherlands; but in the interval the "Grand Monarque" had not by any means been idle. Seeing his schemes of empire checked abroad, he had set himself to overcome the one remaining obstacle to his absolute authority at home. This obstacle was the presence of the Huguenots. It will be remembered that by the beneficent Edict of Nantes, issued in 1598 by Henry of Navarre, freedom of worship was given to these "Puritans" of France. Hitherto that grant of Louis' grandfather had been respected; but in 1685 Louis himself decided that for the consolidation of his power it was essential to render France completely Catholic. The Edict was therefore unconditionally withdrawn, and the persecution of the Huguenots began afresh on an unprecedented scale. Men who refused to recant their Protestant beliefs were sent to life-long slavery at the galleys. Women were cruelly tortured and interned in nunneries. The prisons were crowded with arrested families, and even the alternative of quitting France was ferociously denied them. The ports were watched and soldiers posted on the frontier roads; yet despite their vigilance 400,000 Huguenots man-

aged to escape and spread the tale of horror to surrounding peoples. Their report awoke old memories of the religious wars.

Reformed Europe burned with indignation; and to one mind at least the Protestant enthusiasms which it evoked were not altogether unwelcome. William, Prince of Orange, the Stadtholder of Holland, was ever on the alert to baffle Louis, in whom he recognised the mortal enemy of his country and his creed. Louis' attack upon the Netherlands, he knew well, had only been postponed; it would assuredly be renewed whenever occasion offered, and William grasped eagerly at every chance to forestall the coming blow. The Revocation of the Edict gave him what he sought; and next year he formed afresh a League of Protestant States to combat the monstrous tyranny of France. From this time onward, till his death in 1702, William was fighting and planning almost without cessation to preserve the liberties of Europe; and, when he himself was gone, others took up his rôle, until at last France herself lay prostrate and her great King was humbled before the victorious arms of Marlborough.

Meanwhile, in the critical year of 1688, how did the English people view all this? Aloof as the country stood from the affairs of Europe, the tales told by the French refugees of torture, murder, and the terrors of military rule could scarcely fail to carry their lesson home. Louis became a bogey, a name to be spoken of with bated breath, the very incarnation of Catholic cruelty and despotic greed. The shadow of his presence hard-by across the Channel deepened and intensified the fears which all Englishmen were feeling of another would-be Catholic despot nearer home. The comparatively mild excesses of King James, seen in the light of the Huguenot atrocities, appeared but as a prelude to still blacker crimes. The staunchness of Prince William, on the other hand, could not but win the grateful admiration of the neighbouring country. As the champion of Protestant resistance, he was fighting the same battle as the English Puritans had fought and were fighting still, and their hearts went out to him in the great struggle. But there was a closer tie than this. Of the two daughters, Mary and Anne, born to King James by his first wife, Mary, the elder, had married the Dutch Prince. As her father's next-of-kin, Mary was, moreover, until the recent appearance of the baby boy, true heir to the English crown; and the possibility of offering that crown to her and her Dutch husband had often been discussed by Whig "exclusionists," both while her father was still Duke of York and after he had actually become King. William's own wishes, however, were uncertain; it was by no means a pleasant undertaking; and the memory of Monmouth's failure was a warning which so wise a man as he could scarcely miss. Before he would undertake to claim the throne upon his wife's behalf, William was determined on two things: first, that he must have a written invitation duly signed by authoritative English leaders; and, second, that, when he came, he must come with sufficient force. The letter, written on the night of the bishops' trial, supplied the first condition. The invitation

to come was urgent and outspoken. William gave his assent; and very slowly and deliberately he set to work himself to supply the second.

James's Fall.—Before the Dutch fleet was ready an interval elapsed of just four months—from the end of June until the beginning of November. Under such circumstances four months is a long time. James had his chances, and he threw them all away. "Whom the gods seek to ruin," says the ancient proverb, "they previously drive mad"; and, if ever anyone behaved like a madman, it was James during these days. In August Louis warned him of his peril and offered him French help. James had but to say the word which would have sent his cousin marching against Holland, and William then never could have sailed. With inconceivable fatuity James refused the offer; and Louis, disgusted, went off campaigning on the Rhine. Not that James was unconscious of his peril. On the contrary, he was thoroughly alarmed; and on Sunderland's advice he began to make a bid for popularity by offering concessions at the eleventh hour. Yet even here James blundered, because he could not bring himself to offer half enough. Late in August he promised to summon a Parliament at last; at the beginning of September he declared it should contain no Catholic members; a little later he restored the Magdalen Fellows to their posts.

Such concessions, had they come a twelvemonth earlier, might still have availed to save him; but it was too late now to throw dust in the public eye by any such subterfuges as these; and the public eye already was firmly fixed upon the coast of Holland. Nothing, in fact, now stood between James and his enemy's arrival but a wind which continued obstinately to blow out of the west; and James, in his anxiety, had a new weathercock erected at Whitehall. On 1st November the wind veered round and William sailed. Instead of striking the east coast where all expected him, he headed down the Channel, and landed at Torbay in South Devon upon Guy Fawkes' Day. Things then moved slowly. James set out a fortnight later to join his army, which was marching west. At Salisbury his nose began to bleed and would not stop. This awkward accident increased his irresolution and he returned to London. That night John Churchill, the future Duke of Marlborough, went over to Prince William. Back in London, James still dallied with events, talked of calling Parliament, sent emissaries west to treat for terms. But by the beginning of December nothing effective had been done, and William was almost at the gates. On 11th December James fled, taking with him the Great Seal, which was dropped or thrown into the river. At Sheerness he fell into the hands of some Kentish fishermen and was detained. When released he changed his mind again and returned to London; and the queer thing is that the Londoners, who had spent the interval in hunting Papists, rang the bells at his return. All was not yet lost; but, after sleeping one more night in his palace at Whitehall, James was finally resolved. He fled by boat to Rochester and thence to France, where Louis welcomed him and gave him the handsome palace of St. Germain for his home. Thus ignominiously did the

last Stuart desert his post. There were still thousands upon thousands of his countrymen who even now would have preferred him to the Dutch foreigner who filled it.

The long drama was at length played out; and the tragedy itself had been half veiled by the scene of the concluding farce. Yet, to those who believe in the supreme authority of kings, the real tragedy lay not so much in the downfall of the Stuarts as in the fact that the Stuarts should ever have inherited the crown. There is in all Englishmen a natural and deeply ingrained reverence for the ruler at their head. True leadership they have always acknowledged and admired. And had the successors of the Tudors once attempted to win the country's confidence and to give the country theirs, the history of this century would have been a different tale. Yet History, seen across the ages, is always able to justify herself. With the passing of the Stuarts the day of the English monarchy passed too. No king was ever again the master of the State in the sense that they and their predecessors had been; and if we ask the reason, the answer is that England had found a better way. The necessity of self-government had been forced upon her, simply because her appointed governors had failed; and had they succeeded better, then the development of democracy must inevitably have been more slow. The ancient Athenians used to tell a story, how once, when their citadel was utterly destroyed, the sacred olive of Athena sprouted miraculously on the morrow of the sack, and put forth amid the charred ruins of her sanctuary a fairer, greener, and more lusty growth. So from the wreck of a foolish king's autocracy has sprung the more enduring energy of a great and wise people's freedom.

PART III
WILLIAM III TO WATERLOO
1689-1815

CHAPTER I

WILLIAM THE THIRD AND ENGLAND

The present chapter is probably the last which will bear for its title-head the name of an English ruling sovereign; and for this the reason is not far to seek. The Revolution which turned out James and brought in William was a revolution in a true and literal sense; for by it the whole system of English Government was changed. 1689 is a year which divides the centuries. It witnessed the break-up of a historic system; it saw the old English monarchy pass definitely away; and in the two hundred years and more which have followed the ruling sovereign has ceased in any real sense to rule. England had been more fortunate than most countries in her ancient kings; and on the whole they had served her interest well. From the usurpation of the Norman Conqueror down to the accession of the House of Stuart there had been perhaps no more than three among them—Stephen, Henry III, and Henry VI—who had been altogether men of straw. The rest, whatever their weaknesses and vices, or whatever the perversity of their ambitions, had at any rate been leaders. They had ruled strongly, though often selfishly, and the history of the country which they governed had been largely moulded by the impress of their characters and acts. But such heritage of power as they bequeathed, the Stuart kings frittered foolishly away. Lacking the ability to lead they took refuge in a theory—the theory which now held France and the rest of Europe in its grip—that God had not made kings for the people's benefit, but the people for the King's. The English people, however, decreed otherwise. By the "Glorious Revolution" of 1689 the two rôles were interchanged, and it was henceforth determined that, if kings ruled at all in England, they should rule as servants of the people's will. The solid realities of the crown's power were done away for ever, and only the husk and appearances were suffered to remain. Thus, while the armed forces of the country were still in name his Majesty's army and his Majesty's fleet, yet in practice his Majesty could not command the movement of a single regiment or a single ship of war for his own purposes and against the people's will. The ministers again were still in theory his Majesty's ministers, but they were no longer answerable to him alone; and the days were coming when he would cease to sit among them at their council-board or even to exercise his veto over their policies and acts. The pomp and circumstance of outward show still clung around his person; and he enjoyed still the hollow splendour of a gilded court. But the true glory had

departed. The King remained only as a visible symbol of an authority which had passed from his hands into the hands of others; and it became the duty of a well-conducted monarch (like that of well-conducted little boys) to be seen, indeed, but seldom or never heard.

William's Task and Character.—Though it needed time to develop this new theory of kingship, and though the King's power was not all lost in a day, the real change certainly began when William took the crown. For he took it only by the consent and by the express invitation of Parliament, and the terms on which he took it were very strictly and definitely laid down in what was called the Declaration of Rights. Very far indeed have we travelled since the days when sixty years before a humble *Petition of Rights* was presented to King Charles. It was now no longer a question of petition or request. Parliament was in a position to dictate, and it *declared* without equivocation what rights belonged to Parliament and might under no circumstance be assumed by King or Queen. Parliament was henceforth to be regularly summoned; its laws were no more to be suspended or dispensed (as James had done); without its leave no standing army was to be raised (as also James had done); without its vote no taxes, custom-dues or loans enforced. In short, whatever illegal powers the Stuart sovereigns had hitherto assumed were now to be discontinued one and all. Nevertheless, controlled though he was and hedged about by these limitations and conditions, William himself was no mere puppet king. England was not as yet fully prepared for governing herself; and in this difficult period of transition a strong hand was still needed at the helm. So for all that he was a foreign interloper William attained a mastery in English politics infinitely greater than has fallen to the lot of any sovereign since.

There were two special reasons for his unique ascendancy. In the first place, when William came to the throne the country was still in a most unsettled state. The tranquil interplay of party politics, as we understand them nowadays, was not then understood. The two opposing factions, the Tories and the Whigs, were then antagonists in real and deadly earnest, not polite rivals in the peaceful game of Parliamentary see-saw. The Whigs, if given their way, would have driven the Tories out of public life and clapped the more prominent and dangerous into prison; and the Tories on their part would have desired nothing better than to do the same for the Whigs. They were like two quarrelsome dogs, eager to resume the interrupted fight of yesterday; and it was only William, standing impartially between them, who could keep them from flying at each other's throats. Snarl and bicker as they might, it was his business to keep a tight hold upon the leash; and, as time went on, they themselves came to realise that, however disagreeable, his restraint was good. The country's peace and safety could only be preserved by the ascendancy and self-assertion of the King. Nor, in the second place, was William unfitted by character and training for this arduous task. He was no ordinary man; and his life had

been no ordinary life. In the past he had suffered much; he was troubled from childhood by a distressing asthma; he was seldom or never well; and, besides this, his nerves had been strained almost beyond endurance by the burden of his great responsibilities. For sixteen years he had ruled Holland under the shadow of a great fear. France, her big neighbour, had been watching her, as a cat watches a mouse, ready to spring; and in the long struggles with enemies without and treachery within her Prince had grown prematurely old. The summons to England at the age of thirty-nine found him, if not embittered, at any rate suspicious, taciturn and morose. With his cold unsympathetic manner, his reticence of speech, and his dislike of all conviviality and cheerful sport, he won but little affection; but he at least commanded obedience and respect. The long discipline of his hard life, which had taught him to be master of his own feelings, had made him also a master over others. Strong-minded, domineering sovereigns England has had in plenty, but none perhaps so completely certain of themselves as this grim, care-worn, self-contained, heroic invalid from Holland. William was not content, and circumstance did not allow him, merely to sit silent and ornamental on the throne. He not merely reigned, but ruled.

William and Scotland.—Like Cromwell, the first task which William had to face was the suppression of the Stuart king's partisans in Scotland and in Ireland. In Scotland the affair was brief. The cause of the Stuarts was still popular among the Highlands; and the mantle of Montrose had fallen upon a great clan-leader, John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee. Seeing that the Presbyterians of the south, their traditional opponents, had already declared allegiance to the new Dutch king, Dundee and his followers were doubly eager to come out for James, and in the late spring of 1689 they rose. The loyal regiments under General Hugh Mackay were marched up north against them; and on entering the wild and rugged pass of Killiecrankie they ran into the foe. The impetuous Celts bore down in a furious charge which carried all before them; and it was only the work of a moment before Mackay's regiments were running for dear life over the heather from the deadly sweep of the claymores. But in the very hour of his victory Dundee was himself mortally wounded, hit, so they say, by a silver button fired in place of a bullet from some random gun; and the Highlanders, losing their leader, lost heart and all cohesion. Many dispersed to their homes; and the rest were very soon worn down by Mackay's tenacity. William, who could afford to be generous, allowed the rebels to make peace on easy terms. A proclamation was issued, offering free pardon to all who should take an oath of their allegiance before the last day of 1691. The oath was taken by nearly all the chiefs, but not quite all. MacIan Macdonald, the aged head of the Macdonalds of Glencoe, was delayed on his journey by a snow-storm, and arrived too late to take the oath by the appointed day. For this unlucky accident he and his clan paid dearly, and the sequel is an ugly blot upon the annals of the Scottish race.

Feuds between clans and rival families were still in Scotland of a most violent character. The Highlanders had many bitter foes among the Lowland faction, and chief among them were the Earl of Argyll, head of the great clan Campbell, and John Dalrymple, Master of Stair. Watching their chance to wipe out ancient scores, these two men perceived in the luckless blunder of the old Macdonald a loop-hole for revenge. Stair was at this time the Secretary for Scotland, and he used the influence he had with William to further the design. Making the most of the untaken oath, and suppressing the fact, and cause, of the delay, he prepared an order for the military commander which he got the King to sign. The order ran as follows: "As for MacIain of Glencoe and all that tribe, if they can be well distinguished from the other Highlanders, it will be proper, for the vindication of public justice, to extirpate that set of thieves." On receipt of this order, a strong detachment of red-coats, drawn for the most part from the Campbell clan, were sent in February of '92 to occupy the wild inhospitable glen among the northern hills. They came in the guise of friendly visitors, and as such they were received, lodged in the houses of the unsuspecting peasants and treated with every mark of hospitality. One early morning, a fortnight later, when the snow was on the ground, the cottagers were startled from their beds by the sound of musketry. MacIain and his family were being murdered in cold blood; and when that was finished the soldiers turned upon the rest. There was no quarter offered and no discrimination made. Women and babes in arms were left dead or dying in the door-ways, as the soldiers proceeded in their bloody mission from one cottage to another. When dawn broke, the ground was strewn with corpses; but the greater part of the inhabitants had escaped under cover of the darkness and taken refuge in the hills. There many perished in the deep snow and bitter weather; and when the soldiers had departed and the survivors ventured down at last out of their hiding, it was only to find a heap of charred and smouldering wreckage on the spot where their cottages had stood. Such was the massacre of Glencoe, a hideous example of the clan spirit at its worst, and an act in striking contrast to the habitual clemency of William's methods. William himself cannot be wholly cleared of his responsibility. If he signed the fatal order without knowing what it meant, it was certainly his business to have known; and, though some tardy punishment was meted out to the chief authors of the outrage, no real amends were ever made for the wrong which had been done.

Ireland and James.—Meanwhile, across the sea in Ireland, a fiercer national resistance had been roused, and a bloodier struggle waged. In '89 James had himself appeared in Dublin with arms and men and money supplied by his obliging cousin, Louis XIV; and the Catholic natives had grasped at the opportunity of turning upon the alien land-owners whom Cromwell had set over them. Cut off from succour in an intensely hostile country, the Protestants retired under cover of the towns. At Londonderry, in the north, they had determined to hold out

at whatever cost, remembering, perhaps, the massacre of 1641; and in early April the famous siege began. All through May and June there were fierce bombardments, sallies, and assaults. Then, despairing of open capture, the enemy sat down to a more leisurely blockade. By the middle of July famine was reigning within the walls. Grain was dealt out in the most meagre doles; the horses had been killed for food; and the inhabitants turned, in the extremity of their hunger, to eating dogs, raw hides, and even rats and mice. We are told how one fat citizen was forced to keep his house, so expressive were the sidelong looks which followed him of jealousy, suspicion, or (could it be?) something worse. For, indeed, men had now reached the stage when they would stick at nothing. By the end of July there were no more than two days' rations remaining in the town. Yet all thought of surrender was dismissed—and in point of fact succour was at hand.

As the sun set on 30th July, some English supply-ships, which had been hovering for some time in the neighbouring lough, were seen sailing under full canvas up the River Foyle, which flows through the city. A boom had been constructed by the enemy across the fairway of the river, and now this obstacle alone appeared to stand between the besieged and their deliverance. A vessel named the *Mountjoy* led the advancing line, and she went fair and square at the boom, burst it, recoiled at the shock, and stuck fast in the mud. To the straining eyes on Londonderry walls there followed an awful moment of intolerable suspense; but, as the enemy were putting out in boats to board the *Mountjoy*, the tide began to rise, lifted her off the mud, and swung her clear. By midnight the whole convoy was safe inside the city, and their precious freight landed on the quay. All night and next day the enemy guns kept up a fierce and continuous bombardment; but it proved their parting shot, and on the first day of August the Irish army was seen streaming away southward. The siege had lasted 105 days. The resistance of Londonderry had, in fact, preserved the island for King William, who, nearly a twelve-month later, appeared in person to defend his rights. Landing at Carrickfergus in the June of 1690, he occupied Belfast, and then marched south on James. The two armies met upon the River Boyne. Both were of the most motley composition. William led regulars from England, and mercenaries or volunteers from every Protestant community in Europe; Dutchmen and Huguenots, Germans, Swedes, and Danes here fought side by side with Englishmen against the allies of their common enemy, the Catholic King of France. James's army, strongly posted as it was on the south bank of the river, was yet no match for such enthusiasts as these. His French infantry fought well, as did the Irish horse; but the Irish foot made no attempt to check the fording of the river, and fled helter-skelter before a blow was struck. To his eternal shame James was not slow to follow their example; and shortly afterwards he re-embarked for France. The collapse of the Rebellion was now certain; and the native Irish were marked down for yet another pitiless revenge. Though pardon had been promised to all

who laid down arms, the Protestant landowners resumed their old supremacy, and within a few years their Parliament at Dublin was engaged in grinding the Catholic natives down. It was made impossible for any Catholic to enter public office, to become a doctor or a school-master, or even to inter-marry with a Protestant. The further to increase the land's distress, English jealousy cut off the importation of all Irish cloth; the commercial prosperity of Ulster was thus stifled almost at its birth; and thousands of folk, thrown out of their employment, departed for the colonies out West. For a full century Ireland lay thus, gagged, indigent, and bleeding, until a fresh insurrection in 1798 provoked the abolition of the Irish Parliament, and a new variety of political repression.

Whigs and Tories.—While thus engaged in establishing his power over the Irish and the Scots, William had been faced at home with problems of an even more perplexing sort. Straightforward warfare with an open enemy who were the declared partisans of James was for the new King a much more simple matter than the management of English politicians who were avowedly his friends. For, although both Whigs and Tories had assisted in raising him to power, the two factions were bitterly at variance over the use which he should make of it; nor did the policy which either favoured agree by any means with William's own ideas. The fact is that there was a constant struggle between the rival parties to capture the King's ear, and to influence his plans abroad no less than in England; and, in order to appreciate the course, not of this reign alone, but of many that succeed it, we must have some clearer understanding of the aims and principles for which Whigs and Tories stood.¹

In the first place, it is important to observe that the leaders of the two factions were not essentially of different rank or class. Both were of the aristocracy, landowners for the most part, men of a similar education and upbringing. The right to sit in Parliament was still reserved for the "gentry," or what we may call the "governing class"; and, whether Whigs or Tories obtained office, neither had the least intention of surrendering their privilege to lesser folk. Thorough-paced democracy was, in fact, a far-off dream in the eighteenth century. The Whigs, however, stood, on the whole, for the cause of liberty. First organised by Shaftesbury to thwart the despotic schemes of Charles II, they had no respect whatever for the "divine authority" of kings. On the contrary, they wished to see Parliament all-powerful and the monarch little better than a figure-head. Then, again, since it was Shaftesbury who had led the first revolt against Charles's Catholic plots, the influence of his followers very naturally depended on the support of the Non-conformist sects, and, out of sympathy for these, they denied the right of the Established Church to tyrannise over men's consciences. Tolera-

¹These political titles took their origin from mere nicknames of abuse or contempt. "Whig" was properly a name given to Scottish hooligans, "Tory" to a class of Irish thieves.

tion was, therefore, the watch-word of the Whigs. From this it further followed that in foreign politics they were the bitter enemies of Catholic France, and eagerly embraced whatever opportunities arose of trying conclusions with Louis XIV. They were, therefore, William's most staunch supporters in his foreign wars.

To these three principles of home and foreign policy the Tories, on the other hand, were diametrically opposed. Owing their position, as they mostly did, to the Royalist Restoration of thirty years before, they had the sense to see that the power and credit of the aristocracy were closely bound up with the power and credit of the King. They were, therefore, ardent and convinced supporters of the Stuart ideal of a monarch, omnipotent and absolute. They had acquiesced, indeed, in the expulsion of the egregious James; but they retained for the Stuart family a lurking sympathy, which was, for the moment, satisfied by seeing James's daughters, Mary and Anne, seated in turn upon the throne. But when, with Anne's death, the throne was once more vacant, many of the Tories would have preferred the return of James's son, the Old Pretender, to the alternative of an alien king from Hanover. For the same reason, too, that they believed in a strong monarchy, the Tories equally believed in a strong official Church. The clergy were their best allies and supporters; the Puritans, their old antagonists in politics and war. The Tories, therefore, were opposed to the toleration of dissenters. Lastly, although they had little sympathy with Catholics in England or abroad, they were not for pressing foreign monarchies too hard; for they saw that to upset the French throne's stability might shake, however indirectly, the English throne's stability as well. The Tories, in short, clung to the traditions of the past, and there was some reason in their policy. For, if her ancient system had made England what she was, it had made the Tories also what they were, a very favoured, privileged, and influential class. Like the Conservatives of to-day, they wished to leave well alone and let things bide. Like the modern Liberals, on the other hand, the Whigs looked forward to the future. They believed in the free development of Parliamentary institutions as being far better for the country than a reaction towards the old régime; and, although in most cases they were selfishly convinced that it was the aristocracy alone which mattered, and the Whig aristocracy alone which understood the art of government, yet unconsciously they paved the way for a genuine democracy. In the long run, it has been the more generous and progressive programme of the Whigs that has made modern England what she is to-day.

William and English Politics.—William, who had first crossed the water at the Whig's request and who owed his settlement upon the throne to a Parliamentary majority of Whigs, was very naturally regarded as their nominee, and by them, at least, expected to behave as such. They meant to have their way with him in all things; and revenge upon their political enemies was their first preliminary demand. For this there was plenty of good precedent. When Charles II returned at

the Restoration, he had dealt out rigorous punishment to the men who killed his father. Some who signed the death-warrant had been beheaded; some who, like Cromwell, were already dead, had been exhumed and their remains then brutally gibbeted at Tyburn. The Whigs would now have cheerfully repeated such grim barbarities. There were certainly some Catholics, and perhaps a score or so of Tories, who, in their zeal for James, had overstepped the mark; and, if William had listened to the Whigs, these men would have paid for their indiscretion with their lives. But William did not listen to the Whigs. He was determined, on the contrary, that he at least would not "wade through slaughter to a throne." Even the High Church bishops and other prominent Non-Jurors, who refused to swear the oath of new allegiance, were let off lightly with mere dismissal from their posts; and, when the first Whig Parliament rejected William's Act of Grace promising pardon to all political offenders, he called another Parliament and got a Tory majority to pass it. That was invariably his way. What one party would not do, the other would; and William, who knew quite well what he was after, obtained support from whichever side would give it. Thus the Whigs, too, served his turn in securing religious toleration for dissenters. By an Act passed in 1689 Englishmen were left free, for the first time in their history, to follow their own consciences. Even the Roman Catholics, though not openly acknowledged, were permitted to carry on their ritual on the sly. Quakers and Non-Conformists generally were no more to be molested. Though still excluded, it is true, from entering public office (since the Test and Corporation Acts were still in force) they were rid at least of interference with their worship and, upon condition of subscribing to a certain minimum of doctrine, their ministers were to be recognised as such. In short, the narrow-minded violence of the last two hundred years was over.

William the Third and England.—An era of liberty and enlightenment began. Under the King's fair-handed government, men learnt that it was possible to live amicably together, however much they differed in matters of politics or faith. Freedom of speech was now assured to them; and anyone who liked could air his views in public without fear of being committed to the Tower. Even the Press was given a licence such as it had never heretofore enjoyed; and many fresh newspapers were started in support of various factions with no censor to ban or to control them. Party politics began to absorb the energy of those who in the past had aimed at revolution or sought to gain their selfish ends by civil war; and, though neither party was wholly loyal to William, neither was openly disloyal. The fact was that the domestic peace men now enjoyed had been too dearly bought and was far too highly valued to be lightly thrown away. If England owed her security to William's own tact and moderation, William himself owed much of his authority to the universal fear of James's return. For across the waters of the Channel the Catholic King was still busy with intrigues; and the other and infinitely more powerful Catholic monarch, at whose

court he lay, was ready still to back him. The danger of a Catholic despotism, which England had so narrowly escaped, had not entirely vanished. Against its menace William was the one indispensable protector; and, when he turned from the problems of home government to plunge once more into the continental struggle and renew his old resistance to the French king's greed, it was the national sense of this impending peril which enabled William to carry his people and his Parliament along with him to war.

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM AND FRANCE

William never felt genuinely at home in England. He hated the spite and jealousies of all party-politics. He had little sympathy with the idlers of the court; and his heart was always in reality elsewhere. Himself a Dutchman to the core, he was still—be it remembered—the ruler of the Dutch as well as of the English; and the first place in his thoughts was very naturally reserved for Holland. Nor would he ever have quitted his own people to take an alien crown, had he not realised that only by so doing could he serve their interests best. William's true mission in England was to bring in his new subjects to the succour of his old, and to range the English, if possible, alongside with the Dutch in the struggle against Louis XIV.

Louis the Fourteenth.—How vital and perilous that struggle was, it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. France under Louis was as much the terror of all Europe as Germany has been in our own day. She was already great when some thirty years before Louis had succeeded to the crown. Richelieu's diplomacy had humbled Austria, and so removed her most formidable rival from the field. Mazarin, in his turn, had absorbed the province of Alsace, and thereby extended her eastern frontier to the Rhine. But Louis was not content with what these men had done. He had still further developed and expanded French resources. With the aid of his ministers he had accumulated treasure, organised great armies, built great fleets. Colbert, who, in 1661, succeeded Mazarin as Chancellor, had laid the foundations of a French colonial empire side by side with England's in the East Indies and in North America. Turenne and Condé, the chief of Louis' marshals, had been the foremost captains of their age. Vauban, his engineer and the designer of his frontier fortresses, was perhaps the greatest genius that military science had yet produced. With such resources and such servants at his back, Louis might well dream of subjugating Europe. His favourite ambition was to extend his conquests until his eastern frontier marched wholly with the Rhine, and towards this end he shaped his plans. While the Emperor was busy defending Austria against the aggression of the Turks, Louis had seized the key-fortress of Strasbourg,

and no amount of argument would make him give it up. But the chief obstacle to his expansion lay further away to the northeast. The Lower Netherlands, still to that day the property of Spain, had partially succumbed to him in '68; but when his efforts in the same direction were renewed in '72, Louis had met his match. The Dutch, scared by his approach so near their frontier, had risen and hurled him back. William himself, as their Stadtholder, had proved the hero of that war; nor had he rested easy with its temporary success. He saw with a clear eye what Louis meant to do; and he made it his mission and life's work to thwart him. Three years before he took the British crown, he had answered the French King's aggressive policy by forming a league of Continental powers. Then, finally, as if to gratify his most cherished dreams, England herself had passed into his hands. Her fighting spirit and her great resources lay now at his command. They were a reinforcement of inestimable value, and perhaps, in many ways, essential to the successful resistance of King Louis' schemes.

France and England.—That England was now once more the outstanding rival and natural enemy of France was obvious to many besides William; yet not even his shrewd insight could fully understand how much in the future that rivalry would mean. The truth is that France and England were embarking on a struggle which was to last almost continuously for a century and more. At first the struggle was begun for more or less limited and immediate ends. To save the Netherlands, to check the Catholic excesses of King Louis, and to preserve his own throne from Louis' Protégé, King James, William carried a hesitating country into war (1691-1697). In his last year the struggle was resumed, this time to hinder Spain and Spain's possessions from falling into Louis' power; and throughout the reign of Anne the victories of Marlborough slowly brought France and Louis to their knees (1702-1714). There followed five-and-twenty years of peace, and then England was once again at war with France; but now, though strictly waged about an Austrian question, the struggle began to take a wider scope, and fighting spread to far-off continents where French and English settlers were pushing rival claims (1740-1748). In the Seven Years' War which followed shortly after, this new issue was more definitely joined. Colonial Empire was now seen to be the true prize of the great duel. Campaigns were undertaken in three continents and decided, thanks to Chatham's organising genius, in England's favour. The Indies and North America became accordingly the dominions of Britain and not France (1756-1763). Not many years were out, however, before France found an opportunity for her revenge in supporting England's American colonies in their revolt (1778-1783); but the American war had barely been concluded when the Revolution broke out in France herself, carrying her along strange paths of violence, anarchy, and conquest; so the old issue narrowed down once more to a struggle for the supremacy of Europe. For twenty years (1793-1815) England was fighting desperately for her own existence, no less than for the liberty

of mankind. In that last and fiercest phase of the long struggle, in which Napoleon gambled with his country's life-blood for the conquest of the world, France finally went down. During the one century and a quarter, since William first began it, the two nations had in all been fighting for just on seventy years; and only then was the age-long contest permanently settled, when the Old Guard fell back from the hill at Waterloo.

From William, however, clear prophet as he was, such future developments were hidden; yet a true instinct told him to pit his whole strength and England's against the strength of France; and, indeed, the events of 1689 left him no other choice. Louis had refused to recognise his accession to the English throne. French troops were being sent to assist the rebel Irish against him. French fleets were sailing the channel in support of his open enemy, King James. England herself seemed threatened with invasion. It was a challenge which William, even had he wished it, could not possibly refuse; as it was, he welcomed it with open arms. Already, while still upon the continent, he had formed a powerful combination against France; and he could now count upon assistance from well-nigh every Protestant state in Europe. Besides Holland, Hanover and Brandenburg in Germany and Savoy in southern France were all involved. Even the Austrian Emperor and the King of Spain, though Catholics, were eager to lend a hand in humbling France. England's adherence set, as it were, a "coping-stone" to this Grand Alliance; and the dearest wish of William's heart was granted, when in the spring of 1690 the declaration of war was formally approved by Parliament. "This," he exclaimed with a strange vehemence of emotion, "is indeed the first day of my reign."

Nevertheless, for two years William's hands were full with the campaign in Ireland; and he was forced to content himself, as best he might, with challenging the French supremacy by sea. In 1690 the Dutch and English fleets, under Lord Torrington's command, had fought the French Admiral de Tourville off the cliffs of Beachy Head. They were under strict orders to engage; but the balance of numbers was against them; de Tourville was the most skilful captain of his age, and Torrington was wise enough to run for it and so narrowly escape a worse disaster. For this he was court-martialled and employed no more; but English honour was redeemed in 1692 by Lord Russell, his successor. Invasion was threatening at the moment; an army was actually waiting to embark; and de Tourville was hanging, weather-bound, off Cape La Hogue. When, however, the Dutch and English fleets swept down on him in far superior numbers, he was forced, in his turn, to beat a swift retreat. Most of his vessels effected their escape through the treacherous currents of the Channel Isles; but some dozen of the heavier French ships were driven into port and burnt ignominiously by crews from English boats. London was illuminated and beflagged in honour of this triumph, and not without good cause. The victory of La Hogue decided, at any rate, the mastery of the channel. Henceforward the French fleet

scarcely dared to show its nose; and, during the subsequent campaigns abroad, it was of vital consequence to William (and equally to Marlborough) that the passage of British military transports went altogether free from molestation.

The War in Flanders.—For, already, the war across the channel had now been taken up in earnest. The Battle of the Boyne had ended William's anxieties for Ireland; his troops were thus set free for foreign service, and within six months he himself had crossed with a formidable contingent to the main scene of action in the Netherlands. Not for the first time, nor for the last, in history, these bleak and sodden flats were to form the cock-pit of long and wearisome campaigns. The events of the Great War have made us all familiar with the topography of Flanders, but a word of explanation may perhaps be needed. Between France upon the south, and Holland on the Rhine mouth to the north, lay what was then the Spanish Netherlands, forming, like modern Belgium, a sort of buffer state between the two. The southern frontier of this Spanish Province was now to be the chief object of dispute. The French had long since been nibbling at it, and each fresh advance was regarded with the gravest alarm by the Dutch nation, seeing that it stood to their own less tenable defences as a forward outpost line. Its boundary ran from Dunkirk upon the coast through Lille, Tournai, and Mons to Luxemburg. These towns were then all strongly fortified; and the fortune of campaigns inevitably hung on their capture or their loss. So the tide of war flowed constantly around them, leaving them, after siege and counter siege, first with one and then with the other of the combatants in turn. The first blow, struck in 1691, came from the side of France; for, pressed though he was upon three other frontiers, Louis disdained to stand on his defence in Flanders. He led an army in person to besiege the walled town of Mons, and, though William made a tardy dash to save it, succeeded in forcing its capitulation under the very eyes of the army of relief. Next year another forward step was taken, and another key-fortress at Namur, which guards the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse, suffered in its turn the fate of Mons.

Meanwhile more than one bloody battle was fought in open field; and in these William, who was no skilled strategist, invariably came off second best. But with his habitual perseverance he refused to admit himself beaten and stuck grimly to his task, a task which was not a little lightened by the strain imposed on the French army in other theatres of war. Such pertinacity was finally rewarded. In 1695 William succeeded in recovering Namur, and it now became evident to Louis that decisive victory lay beyond his reach. The staunch defence of the confederate armies, and not least the splendid fighting of the British contingent formed and trained by William, had upset all calculations; and in 1697 the French King welcomed an opportunity for making peace. By the so-called Treaty of Ryswick, he agreed to give up his hold on Lorraine and Luxemburg, retaining from all his conquests of the last twenty years the Rhine town of Strasbourg only. It was a severe check to his

ambitions; but, however humbled, Louis was far from beaten. He had fought the rest of Europe single-handed. His strength had proved unequal to the task. That was all. His dreams of conquest had not for one moment been abandoned, and, though forced for the time being to draw in his horns, he meant, when a better opportunity arose, to try again.

To William himself the peace brought with it one important personal advantage. By the terms of the treaty Louis foreswore his championship of James, and officially acknowledged the Dutchman as the rightful King of England. Such recognition was particularly welcome, since it came at a moment when William's influence in English politics was on the wane. In 1694 his wife, Queen Mary, daughter of James, had died;



FIG. 29.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE CAMPAIGNS OF WILLIAM III AND MARLBOROUGH.

and her death snapped the bond which alone had hitherto guaranteed the loyalty of malcontents. The Tories had agreed to accept William because he had a Stuart wife; so long as the Stuart wife was living, she gave her husband some indirect title to the English crown. But with her death William became once more, in the eyes of the pro-Stuart party, a mere foreign interloper; and only the fact that Mary's sister Anne remained his inevitable heir availed to make his presence tolerable at all. Thus relations grew more strained; and even the advent of peace did nothing to better the position. On the contrary, men who had rallied, as men will, to meet a common danger and who had previously supported warlike measures against France, now began to fall away. The man who had been a hero while there was fighting to be done was

subjected once more, as soon as it was over, to all the mean antagonisms of party spite. William became intensely unpopular; and his popularity was only to be recovered at a terrible cost—a cost from which he himself would have been the first to shrink—the re-opening of the war. For the peace procured at Ryswick proved but a brief truce. Within four years France and England were again at odds. The buffets of unfriendly fortune, which William had so long and so heroically endured, gave him no respite as his end drew on. The very stars in their courses appeared to fight against him; and, in his last year, there arose a situation which seemed to render vain his whole life's labour and shatter in a twinkling all his dreams.

The Spanish Succession.—For that old fox Louis had been waiting for his chance; and now that chance had come, a chance to accomplish his designs and more than his designs through the freakish action of an invalid king. History is made and destiny directed by such queer occurrences; and this (had it succeeded) would have made Louis master of two-thirds of Europe and destroyed the Balance of Power for evermore. The circumstances which led to it were these. The King of Spain, Carlos by name, was from birth a weakling, now prematurely old, and likely at any moment to be found dead in his bed. This Carlos had no children, and there was, therefore, no direct heir to all his vast possessions. Carlos had, however, two sisters. One, Maria Theresa, whom for the sake of clearness we may call the *French sister*, had been married to Louis XIV himself. The other, Margaret, whom we may call the *Austrian sister*, had been married to the Emperor Leopold of Austria. To the descendant of one or other of these sisters must needs pass on Carlos' death the whole heritage of Spain; and the all-important question was to which. Now it was clearly undesirable for every reason that the Spanish crown should pass into Louis' family; for, in that case, Spain and France might sooner or later become united in one kingdom—a terrible event to contemplate. In 1698 William had accordingly concluded with Louis an agreement by which the main bulk of the Spanish King's domains was to go to a descendant of the *Austrian sister* Margaret. The heir selected from the Austrian house was the grandson of Leopold and Margaret, a *baby prince named Joseph*, already heir in his own right to the Bavarian throne. So far, so good; but the baby Joseph proved a broken reed. He died of smallpox in 1699; and there was all William's work to be done again. Negotiations with Louis were at once renewed; and a second Partition Treaty was devised. This time the prince selected from the Austrian House was a more important personage, to wit: the *Archduke Charles*. Charles was the younger son of the Emperor himself, not indeed by the "Austrian sister" Margaret, but by another wife. Being a younger son he had no immediate prospect of succeeding his father on the Austrian throne; and to him, accordingly, Louis agreed that Spain itself might go, stipulating merely that by way of compensation his own family should receive the two Spanish dependencies of Naples and Milan. Having agreed to this William

breathed again, thankful that Spain at any rate was not to be merged in France.

Louis' Triumph.—In all this haggling, however, there was one important person who had been allowed no voice. Carlos of Spain, half-idiot as he was, had still the spirit to resent such interference, and he did not by any means appreciate the care with which these two comparative outsiders were arranging for the disposition of his lands. When news of the Partition Treaties reached him, he flew into a paroxysm of rage, and, while his wife wreaked her annoyance on the bedroom furniture, he consoled himself by vowing to upset their well-laid plan. The diplomatic bargain which William and Louis had struck up was certainly a little premature. Carlos was not dead yet; and, while he lived, he still had power at least to make a will. Perhaps after all he was not quite so mad as they had thought; and so in fact it proved when, shortly after, his death so long expected came to pass. His will was duly opened, and behold his entire possessions bodily bequeathed, not to any member of the Austrian house at all, but to a prince of Louis' line! The heir named in the will was in fact the "French sister's" and Louis' grandson, *Philip of Anjou*.

Here was for William a bolt out of the blue. The Partition Treaties from that moment were mere useless scraps of paper, and Louis' past promises went to the winds. What else could be expected? To see his own grandson crowned King of Spain exceeded the summit of Louis' wildest dreams. True, Carlos had made the stipulation in advance that the French and Spanish crowns should never be combined, and that to this end Philip should renounce all title whatsoever to his grandfather's domains.¹ But little value at the best would such a pledge have been; and Louis saw clearly that, pledge or no pledge, Spain and her possessions were delivered over into his hands. Consider for a moment what this meant. With Spain herself went not merely her colonies in South America, but, in Europe, Sicily, Naples, Milan, and, perhaps most coveted of all, the Spanish Netherlands. Let all these pass, however indirectly, under the power and influence of one who was already the most powerful monarch in the world and Europe's liberties were gone for ever. From the Mediterranean to the German Ocean, and from Gibraltar to the Rhine, Louis would be dominant and supreme. Well might he exclaim in an ecstasy of triumph: "*Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*"!² The barriers, which even nature set between the rival realms, were down.

Preparations for War.—Before this new and awful menace William did not quail. He saw the whole effort of his lifetime—the long campaigns in Flanders, the Ryswick settlement, the difficult bargaining that followed—reduced in a single moment to mere dust. But he faced the issue squarely like the gallant fighter that he was; and, seeing no

¹ Louis' immediate heir was, of course, his eldest son, the Dauphin. Philip of Anjou was the Dauphin's son, but only his second son, and not therefore in all probability likely to succeed to the crown of France.

² There is much doubt whether Louis actually spoke these famous words.

other choice, prepared for war. Yet, even at this crisis, he had still to reckon with the doubtful loyalty of Englishmen. Though the Whigs rallied staunchly to the cause of freedom, the Tories remained openly indifferent or secretly sympathised with France. Luckily for William, however, Louis himself with almost incredible stupidity played into his hands. By two acts of gratuitous and insolent aggression he reawoke the sleeping fears of William's English subjects, and left this country no possible alternative but war. In the first place, no sooner was the dead Carlos' will made public than Louis laid hands with a most indecent haste upon the spoil. He hurriedly occupied the Spanish Netherlands; he sent troops to occupy the forts upon the very edge of the Dutch frontier line of Holland; another step forward and his grip would close upon that long menaced state and his armies hold the Rhine. Such a threat alone was more than the generosity of most Englishmen would stomach; yet the infatuated monarch must needs insult their feelings further by a direct challenge offered to themselves. Louis' old protégé, King James, had just died at the French court; his claim to England could no more be supported; but the exiled Stuart had left behind an heir—the son, now grown to boyhood, whose birth twelve years before had done so much to drive his father's subjects to rebellion. Whether the boy was in reality James's son, or whether (as scandal said) he was a mere "pretender," smuggled into the palace in a warming-pan, Louis cared not a rap. In flat defiance of the Ryswick Treaty, he now proclaimed him the true possessor of the English crown and William a usurper. This made William's case complete. Henceforth, secure of national support and conscious of his high mission, he prepared to measure his strength yet once again against his lifelong foe. Fate decreed otherwise. One day, while he was riding in the grounds of Hampton Court, his horse stumbled on a mole-hill and threw him heavily. The only actual hurt that he sustained was a broken collar-bone. But his frail and outworn constitution was not sufficient to overcome the shock; and after a brief illness he was dead. The struggle against Louis, long, stern and bloody, but at the last triumphant, was reserved for other hands than his.

CHAPTER III

MARLBOROUGH'S WARS

Anne and Marlborough.—Anne, second daughter of King James II, and last member of the house of Stuart to ascend the English throne, was altogether lacking in those qualities which had made its other members either notable or notorious. A more commonplace character than this plain, stout, dull-witted female it is impossible to imagine. A good mother of a family she might have been, for she had a kindly heart. But even this humble distinction was denied her, and not one

of her numerous children survived the age of ten. Her husband, Prince George of Denmark, was as stupid as herself. "I have tried him drunk, and I have tried him sober," said Charles II jokingly, "and there is nothing in him." George was, in fact, a complete nonentity. He carried no weight whatever in English politics. The rôle played by his predecessor, William, was utterly beyond his powers; and the authority still vested in the crown was swayed by other and less honest hands. The Queen's impressionable and doting mind was easily influenced by her female friends; and during her reign the real powers behind the throne were two scheming women, each of whom was in turn successful in capturing Anne's ear. The first and more important of these two confidantes was a certain Sarah Jennings, by marriage the Duchess of Marlborough, and thus, by an amazing stroke of fortune, wife to the one man who was capable of preserving the country at this crisis of its fate.

The fact is that now and for a dozen years to come the main scene of English effort was pitched upon the battlefields of Europe, and the control of England's destiny passed for the time being into the soldiers' hands. Anne's incompetence was, therefore, through the assistance of his wife, the opportunity of Marlborough; and the world-shaking genius of this great commander dwarfed and threw completely in the shade every petty plot and subterfuge of the time-serving politicians operating at home.

For so great a man, Marlborough's past career had been strangely chequered and discreditable. Twice in ten years he had played the traitor to his King. First, after helping by his defeat of Monmouth at Sedgemoor to establish James II on the throne, he had been among the foremost to accept the Revolution, and exchange the old master for the new. But, though he had joined William with indecent haste, Marlborough's new allegiance did not last. Treasonable correspondence had soon passed between him and James. He had revealed important military secrets to the French, boasted of the act, and was dismissed from William's service in disgrace. Such twofold treachery has no excuse; and the truth is that in Marlborough's character honour had no place. He was a self-seeker, first and last, working for his own ends with calculating foresight, and far from satisfied with power alone. It is only too clear that he was a slave to money, and notoriously stingy in the use of it. "That I am not the Duke of Marlborough," said some one so accosted by mistake, "is not difficult to prove: in the first place, I have but two guineas in my pocket; and, in the second place, they are very freely yours." It is recorded that he even grudged a pension to a servant who had saved his life. Happily for England, however, fate had so arranged that Marlborough's interests and her own now coincided; and the keen penetration of that cool, well-balanced mind was set at the service of her cause. In the Council Chamber Marlborough's judgment never faltered, and seldom failed; so that European statesmen came almost to regard it as infallible. But, though much more than a soldier, he was a soldier before all else. His handsome bearing and suave geni-

ality of manner made him the darling of his men. His consideration for their needs was wonderful; and from his sublime confidence they caught the inspiration of an invincible resolve. No accident could ruffle his composure; he was like an iceberg amid the fury of a battle; and, whether in planning the details of an attack or the larger strategy of a campaign, his daring and imagination have never been surpassed. He is probably the greatest military genius England has produced, and worthy to rank with Caesar and Napoleon among the greatest captains of all time.

The Spanish Campaign.—And never had the nations of Europe greater need for such a man. France had already proved that alone and single-handed she could hold out against the world; and now with the renewal of the war in 1701 she no longer stood alone. By the accident of Carlos' will Spain had been added to her strength. Bavaria, too, had joined her; and Savoy was presently to follow suit. The odds were, in fact, enormously altered in her favour. Nor was this all. Like Germany in 1914, she possessed the huge advantage of interior lines. War threatened her, it is true, upon four separate fronts; in the north, where England and Holland were certain to attack; on the east, where the German states were gathering to the Rhine; in the south, where Austria was intending to dispute the French heir's inheritance of Spanish Italy; and, lastly, in Spain itself, where an English campaign was to be launched to drive the French heir from off his throne. But Louis' hands, though full, were not embarrassed. Like the German Kaiser, he was not content to remain on the defensive. Standing, as it were, in the centre of the ring, he struck out north, east, and south, against his enemies. With one army he drove back the Dutch upon the Lower Meuse. With a second he crossed the Rhine, and joining hands with his Bavarian ally, prepared a blow against the Austrian capital itself. With a third he occupied the plains of Lombardy, and held Milan against the Austrian regiments of Prince Eugene. In Spain alone did Louis wage a war of pure defence. The reason is obvious enough. Under the dead Carlos' will he had promptly claimed possession on his grandson's behalf; and Spain was already his. In Spain, therefore, the task confronting the allies appeared, perhaps, the most hopeless of success. Though Portugal was presently to join them, all operations had to be planned from England, and maintained across the sea. The Spaniards themselves, oddly enough, were for the most part in favour of the French interloper; and when Lord Peterborough appeared with a small English expedition to attempt the recovery of Spain, he had before him a very uphill fight. Happily Peterborough was the one man out of a thousand for the job. In lightning marches he outdid Hannibal himself. He could make one regiment do the work of five; and he was a past master in the game of bluff. He would ride up to a town, and cow it into unconditional surrender by the threat of instant bombardment with purely imaginary guns. At another time he would improvise a troop of cavalry by purchasing horses and putting infantry upon their backs.



QUEEN ANNE HOUSE, CASTLE HOWARD



GEORGIAN HOUSE, LOSEBY HALL

Such methods soon bore fruit. Within a few months this astonishing adventurer had captured the impregnable citadel of Barcelona by direct assault. Through that brilliant stroke Valencia and Catalonia—a large strip of Eastern Spain—fell at once into his hands; and Peterborough's successes hereabouts laid open Madrid to another English army from the West. In 1706 Philip, the French usurper, took to flight, and the Spanish capital was entered by English troops. The success, however, was short-lived. The Spaniards very soon rallied against the English. Peterborough went off disgusted to another seat of war; and the chance of recovering Spain by a direct conquest vanished. One most vital consequence, however, came from the English effort in these parts.

Sea Power and Flanders.—Like Cromwell, Marlborough had discerned that there was use for the English fleet in southern waters. By such a threat to French and Spanish shipping, it was possible at once



FIG. 30.—THE RESOURCES OF LOUIS XIV IN WAR.

to divert attention from the English Channel, and also to embarrass the enemy's most vital Mediterranean trade. To the Mediterranean, therefore, was dispatched a strong contingent of the English fleet. Its activities were unexpectedly successful. It covered the transport of supplies and reinforcements to Lord Peterborough. It won for England the indisputable title to command the middle seas; and, above all, it effected a capture, without which the English hold upon them could never have been long maintained. In 1704 Admiral Rooke was cruising near Gibraltar with some troops aboard, when it occurred to him to try an assault upon the place. The Rock was not then, as it now is, a fortress bristling with defensive works and guns, and Rooke was able to get his men ashore without much serious opposition. The day after the preliminary bombardment was, as it chanced, a Saint's day. Most of the Spanish garrison went piously to church to hear the Mass; and, finding

the place unguarded, some English sailors clambered up by a precipitous track, hoisted their flag above the citadel, and thus, by a lucky accident, rendered Gibraltar British. The importance of its capture it is well-nigh impossible to over-estimate. It gave England a permanent base in enemy waters. It enabled Nelson, at a later date, to maintain his famous blockade upon Napoleon's ports. Without it the Nile and Trafalgar could never have been won. Marlborough, in fact, realised as did Chat-ham after him that British strategy must combine seapower with land-power; and the skill with which he and the Whig ministers fostered England's naval development did much to win the war.

But it is time that we were turning to other theatres of war more hotly contested and, for the present purpose, more immediately decisive. In the opening year of 1701 Louis had gained one great initial advantage over the allied troops. He had struck, as we have already said, at several points, but above all, he had struck, upon the north, overrunning the Spanish Netherlands and driving back the Dutch on their own soil. The value of this success was undeniable. It set France free at a blow from that peril to which she is by nature peculiarly subjected—the peril of invasion from the north. So things stood at the end of the first year's campaigning, when Marlborough's genius suddenly began to put a different complexion on affairs and to raise for the allies a new star of hope. In 1702 he appeared in the Low Countries with a small but efficient force of English soldiers; and in the next two years by dint of stubborn fighting succeeded in thrusting back the French from the Meuse valley upon the more westerly line of Antwerp and Namur. The centre of the war now shifted to another quarter. Foiled in the north, Louis turned his attention towards the east. There lay Austria, distracted by Hungarian inroads on her rear, threatened by Bavaria on her flank, and, as it appeared to Louis' eye, at least, an easy prey. An imposing scheme was formed for her undoing. In 1703 a part of the French army of the Rhine advanced into Bavaria, joined hands there with Max the Elector, and prepared, in conjunction with the French troops in Italy, to sweep all three together on Vienna and deal embarrassed Austria a knock-out blow. From the very start, however, the imposing scheme missed fire. The forces in Italy were unexpectedly detained by the defection of Savoy upon their flank. The others, instead of marching straight ahead without them, waited, and lost their chance. Before another year was out they had been overthrown and practically destroyed upon the field of Blenheim.

March on Bavaria.—The stroke by which fortune was so miraculously reversed was planned in the opening months of 1704. At that time the French forces, confident, and on the whole victorious, were massed as follows:—In the Netherlands and opposite to Marlborough stood the Marshal Villeroi with the main army of France. In Alsace, and covering the frontier of the Upper Rhine, was Tallard, faced by Eugene who had recently been summoned from Milan to the defence of

Germany. The third great army under the leadership of Marcin was waiting in Bavaria for the moment when the march upon Vienna should begin. With these three armies of Villeroi, Tallard, and Marcin, the initiative for action indubitably lay. Yet it was Marlborough, and not they, who acted first. His plan, which, for sheer audacity, may rank with the greatest strategic conceptions of all time, was simply this—to leave a covering force to contain Villeroi, to draw away from Holland the main mass of his own troops, to march with these up the valley of the Rhine, pass across Tallard's front, and fall with unexpected and annihilating force upon Bavaria. The plan involved big hazards. If the French guessed its object in time to send Marcin sufficient reinforcements, it must fail. Yet upon its success and its rapid success hung, not the fate of Austria only, but the whole fortune of the allied arms. Its details were therefore very carefully concealed. Marlborough took the whole responsibility upon himself, asking leave of the home government but in the vaguest terms; and so profound was the secrecy which he observed that, when in May he quitted Holland and sped hot-foot up the valley of the Rhine, nobody in England had the smallest notion whither he was bound.

That the arm-chair critics wagged their dubious heads over what seemed to them a mad adventure did not trouble Marlborough much. To the French marshals, at any rate, his movements were a source of grave perplexity, and throughout the early stages of his march he kept them upon tenter-hooks of doubt. Whether he was intending to strike east into Bavaria or westward into France, there was no means of knowing. Tallard, fearing the latter, clung strictly to Alsace and redoubled his watch. By the first week in June, however, Marlborough had arrived in his march along the Rhine as far south as its tributary the Neckar. Here was the point at which his real intentions were bound to be revealed. Should he swing right and deploy his army westward, it must be clear that his objective lay in France. But he did not turn west. He left Prince Eugene to keep an eye on Tallard's army, then, himself, turned eastward along the Neckar valley, picked up the German army of the Margrave of Baden, and disappeared from sight in the direction of Bavaria. Before, however, he could hope to penetrate its frontier, there remained one serious obstacle to cross—the River Danube; and the next step for Marlborough was to secure a bridge suitable for the passage of his troops and for the maintenance of the long communications with his base. Such a bridge there was at the town of Donauwörth; and for Donauwörth accordingly he made. Before the Franco-Bavarians could reinforce its garrison, he had swept down upon it, stormed the heights of Schellenberg which command the approaches to the city, and occupied the bridge. The way was now open to the Bavarian plains, and Marlborough put the opportunity to immediate and most vigorous use. His troops were set to lay waste the country-side in all directions; scores of villages were burnt and plundered; cavalry rode

to the very gates of Munich. Shaken by such rough treatment, the Elector wavered: a little more, and he was on the verge of making terms. The great march's purpose appeared to have been achieved.



FIG. 31.—THE CAMPAIGN OF BLENHIM.

But the end was not yet. The French had no intention of leaving so valuable an ally as the Elector in the lurch, and already Tallard was hurrying eastward upon Marlborough's tracks. In the last days of July, his arrival in Bavaria turned the scales. With Marcin's and the Elec-

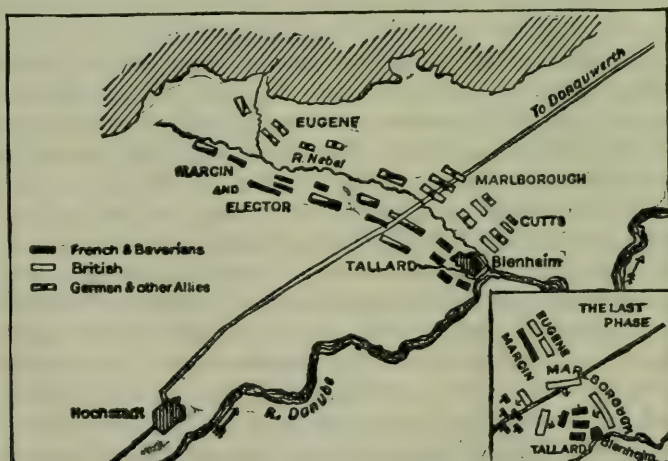


FIG. 32.—THE BATTLE OF BLENHIM.

tor's, his troops outnumbered Marlborough's, and when all these three together struck up towards the Danube, threatening Donauwörth and the vital artery of his supplies, the Englishman was forced to hurry northward for his life. But Marlborough too had a surprise in store.

Upon the north bank of the river, fresh from a secret and forced march out of the Rhineland, Eugene was awaiting him. Near Donauwörth the two joined hands. Their combined numbers were now at least equal, or, if anything, perhaps superior to the armies of Tallard, Marcin, and the Elector, which, about the same time, but a little further westward, had crossed the Danube to its northern bank. They were now encamped some five miles distant, blocking the space between the river and the hills. Their right flank rested upon the little village of Blenheim. It was the 12th of August.

Character of Armies.—The engagement which was to be joined upon the morrow, and which, in its crushing issue, was to be decisive of so much, may, in a sense, be called the first great British battle of modern times. It began that long and magnificent series of encounters by which the struggle against France was for a century maintained, and which culminated at last on the field of Waterloo. In scale perhaps it was not particularly imposing, for the numbers on each side were little more than fifty thousand men, and neither possessed above a hundred pieces of field artillery. But its tactics were of a piece with what followed rather than with that which went before. The cavalry, for example, no longer charged, like Cromwell's Ironsides, pistol in hand, but were taught to rely almost entirely on cold steel. The infantry, too, had changed considerably since the English Civil Wars, and had become a far more efficient and important arm. It consisted no longer of musketeers and pikemen intermingled, for, thanks to the recent invention of the bayonet, the eighteenth century foot-soldier did duty for them both. His firearm was still a clumsy instrument, short in range, and still to be loaded at the muzzle, but, in comparison with the foot-soldiers at Marston Moor and Naseby, he himself was very highly trained. To advance in close order, as did the British infantry at Blenheim, under a withering fire from musket-ball and grapeshot, and yet to reserve the precious volley until point-blank range was reached and the two lines were practically touching, must have been a supreme test of men's discipline and endurance. British pluck has seldom shown up better than under the grim ordeal of these bloody fields. Nevertheless, it would be useless to pretend that the victory of Blenheim was England's and England's alone. Eugene's German army was a most valuable addition to British strength, and, though it was on the English contingent that fell the main brunt of the fighting, the credit of assisting the decisive stroke at the crisis of the day lay with the Savoyard.

Battle of Blenheim.—It was early, before sunrise, on 13th August that the allied force moved out from its encampment and took the Blenheim road. The morning mists hung heavy; and the force was never sighted until close upon its goal. That goal was the French army, which lay extended on a broad front of some four miles between the Danube and the hills. Its position was in some degree strengthened and protected by a marshy stream, the Nebel, which flows into the river

close to Blenheim. The upper reaches of this stream were held by the French left under Marcin and the Elector of Bavaria; but Tallard's command was mainly massed in Blenheim itself, thus leaving, as we shall see, the centre somewhat weak. It was, however, against Blenheim, the capture of which would have turned the whole French line, that Marlborough chose to strike. About noon, when all was ready, Lord Cutts, whom they called the Salamander for his love for the hottest of the fight, was ordered up against the village palisades. Both armies withheld their fire to the latest moment, the English actually waiting until their leader touched with the sword the timber of the palisades. There was a brief tussle, the English thrusting and wrenching to obtain an entry; and then, not without heavy loss, they were hurled back. Within an hour or so the experiment was repeated; and again it failed. Marlborough recognised the failure; and with that quickness of thought which is the gift of great commanders he altered his whole plan. He looked now for an opportunity of decision to the centre of the line. In spite of the difficulties here presented by the marshy bottom, he got his cavalry across the Nebel. By timely aid from Eugene he was enabled to maintain them there while the line of infantry was forming; and then, as the sun sloped westward, he hurled his full strength into a last assault. It pierced the thin French centre through and through; and, while Marcin's men were falling slowly back and dispatching urgent messages to Tallard on their right, the English burst a gap and divided the two French commanders from each other. Marcin's messengers were captured or went astray, so that Tallard in his ignorance clung on to Blenheim until it was too late and the English were closing in upon his rear. The main bulk of his forces were thus caught in a trap. Their surrender was inevitable: the first summons, indeed, was haughtily rejected, and the officer commanding in the village drowned himself in the Danube to avoid a worse disgrace. But, eventually, some ten thousand men or over of the proudest and most formidable army in the world gave themselves up. The Battle of Blenheim was not to end the war. It did not even decide the final issue; but, though in its immediate result it reduced Bavaria to impotence and saved Vienna, it did much more than that. It destroyed once and for all the prestige of Louis and the growing tradition of French invincibility. It marked, in a word, the turning of the tide.

II

Oudenarde and Malplaquet.—After Blenheim the focus of the war swung back to Flanders once again. Pressure was kept up against the strong French defences; but it was a painful and laborious business; results were meagre, progress slow. A sort of stagnation crept over the members of the Grand Alliance; and only the incredible folly of the French in accepting a battle gave Marlborough at last the opportunity of winning one. At Ramillies, in 1706, he achieved a startling and most

fruitful triumph. The Frenchmen ran as they had never run before. Their morale was broken, and their lines of defence began to crumble. Before the year was over, Marlborough had thrown them out of the Spanish Netherlands and back on their own soil. The magic of his success had awaked, in short, a new terror in the enemy's heart: for France herself seemed threatened with invasion. In 1708 the threat took more visible shape. A fresh victory at Oudenarde opened to Marlborough the passage of the frontier. He laid siege to the great frontier fort of Lille, and after sixty days' investment it surrendered. Louis himself took fright. He offered terms, and very generous terms they were. But the blood of the British Government was up and the offer was refused.

Thus, in 1709, the negotiations, which might easily have led to an honourable and advantageous peace, were broken off. It was a false and fatal step. For there was now to be disclosed that wonderful phenomenon which has so often in the history of European warfare defied and falsified the easy calculations of her enemies—the spirit of France at bay. Never perhaps has a nation been more utterly exhausted than the French nation at this crisis. Louis' treasury was nearly empty. His men were dispirited; the confidence of his commanders shaken. The spectre of famine hovered over the land. Yet the appeal of Louis to his people's loyalty was one which, in France at least, has never gone unanswered. The sacred soil was in danger, and with a wonderful effort of self-sacrifice the French nation rallied to its defence. A new army was enrolled, composed for the most part of tattered, miserable, half-starving lads, but fired with the high ardour of a new resolve. Villars, the one general who had suffered as yet no disaster on the field, was appointed at its head; and in the summer of 1709 he prepared for a last blow which should deliver France. Marlborough was already battering at the now diminished line of frontier forts. In early September Tournai, after a magnificent defence, had shared the same fate as the neighbouring town of Lille; and Mons, which William had once taken, once lost, was the next to be attacked. Marlborough shrewdly reckoned that this threat to Mons, the fall of which must lay bare the entrance into northern France, would draw the French army into open battle; and he was right. Villars marched up at once to a few miles south of Mons, and by 9th September he had entrenched his army strongly among the woods of Malplaquet. Marlborough moved immediately to the attack. He had the superiority of numbers and, as he imagined, of morale. He had not realised as yet the enthusiastic temper of the new French troops. That enthusiasm, aided by the natural advantages which belonged to the defence, proved his undoing. For when the English came up against the fringes of the wood they were checked, held, and finally repulsed with an appalling loss. The earth-works, strengthened with felled timber and concealed by the thick scrub, enabled the French to take full toll of the attackers at a minimum loss to their own ranks. By noon it became obvious that the allies'

strength was spent and they could do no more. But the French, too, were sorely shaken. They had not the numbers to press home their brief advantage; and before evening they effected a retirement, defeated it may be, but unbroken and unpursued. Though Marlborough held the battle-field and soon after captured Mons, there was cold comfort in such triumphs. This "Pyrrhic victory" of Malplaquet, which cost him some twenty thousand men as against the French fifteen, sounded a death-knell to his hopes. An advance on Paris was no longer possible. The grand effort of France had achieved the purpose of her monarch; and, if Louis could not hope to win the war, it was now clear, at any rate, that he could not decisively be beaten.

Treaty of Utrecht.—The truth is that Marlborough's luck had turned at last; and close upon the heels of military failure came the more sinister misfortune of political defeat. The wire-pullers at home had for some time since been busy in undermining the influence of his name. His wife the Duchess, erstwhile confidante of Her Majesty the Queen, had lost the secret of her mysterious hold; and a fresh favourite, Mrs. Masham, was now supreme in the inner parlours of the Court. To the Tory politicians, who had long been hankering for a separate peace with France, this lady was a most serviceable tool, and she used the opportunities of private conversation to poison her mistress's mind against the pro-war Whigs. Nor did the rot stop there. However loudly Whig leaders might proclaim the importance of humbling Louis to the dust, the country began to tire of them and their opinions. The arrest and trial of a certain High Church parson for preaching sermons on the Tory side roused a regular storm of indignation. A year after Malplaquet was fought the Whigs were turned ignominiously from office, and a Tory Government under Harley and St. John stepped into their shoes. Secret negotiations with Louis were immediately begun, and not even Marlborough himself had any power to stop them. While he was still hammering at the French frontier lines, the politicians were tenderly engaged in letting France down lightly at the council-board.

In 1712 matters had proceeded far enough to declare a termination of hostilities and bring English armies home. It was not until next year that the actual treaty was concluded at Utrecht; but the principles on which its terms were based had been decided already when Harley and St. John entered upon power. They were not principles which red-hot enemies of France could approve; for Louis' grandson Philip was allowed the throne of Spain, and many vowed that the cause for which the allies had been fighting had been criminally betrayed. The fact was, however, that, since the allies originally went to war, the circumstances had greatly changed. Owing first to his father's and then to his elder brother's death, Charles, the Austrian candidate for Spain, had himself been elected to the Emperor's throne. That Spain also should now be given to him seemed even less desirable than that it should be given to Philip. So to Philip it went by the Treaty of

Utrecht, a pledge being exacted that he should never under any circumstance ascend the throne of France. Behind that pledge, moreover, there were now sound guarantees. France had fallen from her high estate; her power to harm was for the moment gone; and the allies saw to it that her more dangerous claws were drawn. The Spanish Netherlands, that standing menace to her northern frontier, were made over to her arch-enemy the Austrian; and the Dutch were allowed the privilege of garrisoning the barrier towns. Gibraltar remained with England, setting the Mediterranean and the Spanish ports, as it were, within her grip. But more important still than this and other minor acquisitions¹ was the war's more general effect upon British power at sea. Shouldering, as England did, almost the entire burden of the naval fighting, she emerged from the ordeal as in 1718, with a fleet incomparably stronger than when she entered it. France, as she weakened, had lost power to challenge England. Even Holland, England's old rival, had dropped out of the race; and thus the maritime supremacy, which Cromwell had recovered and Charles II lost, was now, by a sort of accident, thrust into British hands; and, while most men imagined that England's destiny must turn upon the battle-fields of Flanders, Britain was learning, so to speak, upon the sly, to rule the waves.

Meantime the man who had stood almost alone between Europe and her fate was treated with an ingratitude which moves our pity even for one who was himself a monster of ingratitude. Marlborough when he reached home was assailed with every sort of mean abuse. He was accused of pilfering the public funds, hooted in London thoroughfares as a thief, and driven at last into ignominious exile on the continent. Anne, still infatuated by the egregious Mrs. Masham, lifted no finger to protect her servant; and very soon she was herself to pass from off the stage. The reign, which had begun amid the clash of arms, was to end almost immediately with the return of peace. The dull, good-natured lady, who, in name at least, had ruled over the country through these stirring years, had at last but one melancholy claim to excite the languid interest of her countrymen. She died without an heir; and, while she lay a-dying, Whigs and Tories were once more in hot dispute over the vexed question of the royal succession. The issue, however, did not really stand in doubt. The unromantic nature of the feeble Anne had robbed the House of Stuart of its old glamour; and, though at times the Queen's own thoughts might turn to the young exile who, despite all that had happened, was still her father's son, yet England on her death accepted, almost without murmur, the importation from abroad of an unknown German Prince.

¹ England received Newfoundland, Nova Scotia (Acadia) from France; from Spain, Minorca and certain trading rights in South American waters.

CHAPTER IV

THE 'FIFTEEN AND THE 'FORTY-FIVE

Just a century before Anne's death it will be recalled that a young princess of England, daughter of James I., and sister of Charles I., had been married to the Protestant ruler of the German Palatinate. With the subsequent misfortunes of that ill-starred couple we are not here concerned, nor yet with their daughter Sophia, who was duly married in her turn to the Elector of Hanover; but rather with Sophia's son, Prince George by name, now Hanover's Elector in his father's stead. For George, though three parts German and but one part English, was the only possible heir (bar one) to the vacant English throne. However roundabout his claim, he was at least a Protestant, which was more than could be said for his one rival; and by the Act of Settlement drawn up in William's reign he had already been appointed Anne's successor. So, when Anne died in 1714, the English people, not knowing of a better, accepted this alien monarch as a matter of due course. After all that had happened, it was impossible to pretend that the bestowal of the crown was any longer of such vital consequence; and very few could feel either wildly enthusiastic or righteously indignant over the coronation of King George the First. It was perhaps easier upon the whole to be amused.

The Old Pretender.—The other claimant to whom we have referred was, of course, that son who had been born to James at the time of the Seven Bishops' trial, best known in English history as the Old Pretender, and in France, where his years of exile had been mostly spent, as the Chevalier de St. George. This man, who like his father bore the unlucky name of James, had still his following in England, a parcel of staunch unbending Tories who gave their nightly toast to the "King over the water," coupled with it the name of "the little gentleman in black velvet," whose innocent burrowings beneath the earth had brought the hated William to his grave, and swore in secret the solemnest of oaths that one day not far hence the Stuart should come into his own again. There was perhaps a certain air of unreality about the tragic devotion of these solid English gentleman for a now exploded cause; but in Scotland, the Stuarts' true home and the last stronghold of Jacobite enthusiasm, things were different. There the proud national spirit, fostered through many centuries of border-warfare, was smarting afresh under the infliction of a singular indignity. Early in Anne's reign, when the great French war began, the fear of an alliance between Louis and the Scots had driven the English government to a sweeping precautionary measure. Briefly they had insisted that Scotland should come directly under the English rule. In 1707, after a last stormy session, the old Scots Parliament, which had sat

so long in Edinburgh, was told that it must sit in Edinburgh no more. Members were to be sent to Westminster instead, and there merged in the common council of the united realm. For purposes of government, and also (since custom-duties were abolished on the border) for purposes of trade, England and Scotland were henceforward to be one. True, the Presbyterian Kirk was to remain the official church beyond the Tweed; the Scottish laws and law-courts continued to be administered apart; and from many English taxes the poorer and at that time far less prosperous country was justifiably exempt. Yet, for all that, Scotland was no longer mistress of her fate; she had lost her treasured independence; and can it be wondered that the so-called "Union" awoke a sense of bitter grievance in a race the most proudly independent in the whole wide world?

That grievance gave James Stuart his opportunity—an opportunity which very characteristically, however, he threw completely away. A worse leader of a forlorn hope than the Old Pretender can scarcely indeed be imagined. Conscience he had and a rigid sense of duty, which forbade him to give up the Roman Catholic faith and so remove the chief obstacle which kept him from the throne. He was brave too, and had fought with credit among the French dragoons at Oudenarde and Malplaquet. But imagination, audacity, or firm resolve were altogether wanting from his character. And so it was that, when in 1715 risings both in Highlands and in Lowlands were made on his behalf, James Stuart himself was not upon the scene. The Earl of Mar, who led the Highland clansmen, met Argyll's troops at Sheriffmuir, and, though no victory was gained by either party, the rebellion began at once to peter out. When soon afterwards the Pretender at last landed, he came a month too late. He accepted his ill-success with pious resignation. "It is no new thing with me," he said, "to be unfortunate"; and six months later he had re-embarked for France. His parting act was typical. His troops had, it seems, destroyed some crofters' huts and burnt their crops; James sent back a message of sincere regret and money in compensation for their loss. His brief adventure over, he wandered on the continent, where in 1719 he married a Polish wife, and the next year there was born to him a son—Charles Edward, the Jacobites' last hope.

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The Young Pretender.—Five-and-twenty years went by before Charles Edward was of age to strike his blow. During the interval England meanwhile had prospered greatly under Walpole's guidance, but under Walpole's guidance she had also fallen asleep. There were not above twelve thousand troops all told in the country's service; and, though England was once again at war with France, little thought was given to the peril from the north. Yet that peril was none the less imminent. Scotland at any rate had not been sleeping; the memory of her old grievance was still nursed with a grim tenacity; and in a

thousand Highland cots the men were keeping their claymores bright against the looked-for day of Prince Charlie's home-coming. Abroad, too, intrigue was stirring; France saw the value of a sudden stroke; and Rome, ever on the watch, had bestowed her blessing on the enterprise. On the 23rd of July, 1745, a small French frigate landed at Moidart, on the coast of the West Highlands, a young man undemonstratively dressed "in a black coat, with a plain shirt, not very clean, a fair round wig, black stockings, and brass buckles on his shoes." His arrival was not expected; he had brought but half-a-dozen friends along with him; and, when the neighbouring chiefs were summoned out to meet him, there was a very comprehensible reluctance to fall in with his design. A young Macdonald, however, showed a bolder spirit than the rest, and, seeing him finger the handle of his broad-sword, Charles Edward turned, "You at least," he said, "will not forsake me." "I will follow you to the death," was the reply; and that loyal declaration won the day. Lochiel, the most influential of the Highland chieftains, joined the cause. Enthusiasm ran like wild-fire through the country-side. The Macdonalds, the Stewarts of Appin, and other fighting clans soon gathered for the fray; and, when Lochiel brought in his Camerons to Charles Edward at Glenfinnan, the Royal Standard was then and there unfurled upon the bleak hill-side; and the war had begun.

As the insurgents swept south upon the Lowlands, the two English regiments posted on the Forth fell back in cowardly flight. Edinburgh town surrendered without more ado, though the citadel itself held out; and, as the Prince rode through the streets in his Stuart tartan kilt and with a white rose pinned upon his bonnet, the crowd pressed round in an ecstasy of devotion to touch his clothes or kiss his hand. Meanwhile Sir John Cope, the English Government's commander, had rallied his timid troops upon the coast; and he was now beginning to march them back upon the capital along the Dunbar road. Twelve miles from Edinburgh the two armies collided on the field of Prestonpans. It was a short day's work. To the skirl of their pipes the Highlanders charged home; and the cold steel of their claymores was more than even the dragoons could face. Cope's guns were carried by assault, almost before they had fired a single shot. In ten minutes the battle had been turned into a rout, and the English, "running like rabbits," had melted away.

The tempting road to England now lay open; and the Prince, whose dare-devil spirit was the heart and soul of the rebellion, determined, against all advice, to take it. "Gentlemen," he had said on the day of Prestonpans, "I have thrown away my scabbard"; and that gesture was the key to his campaign. He saw that he must strike while men's minds were yet undecided. Speed was everything; there could now be no turning back; and who shall say but he was right? Six short weeks of triumph were ahead of him. Starting from Edinburgh with 6,000 men (still Highlanders in the main, for the Lowlanders even now were

chary of lending him support), he marched south, avoided the English force at Newcastle, and, taking the western route, struck down through Moffat and Carlisle to Manchester. Though the force he had eluded was already closing on his rear, and though another English army lay ahead, Prince Charlie did not falter. He pushed bravely on, and, at the beginning of December, he had marched with colours flying into Derby. He was now within 130 miles of the capital itself. London was in a panic; there was a run upon the Bank; and King George the Second wavered in an agony of doubt between taking the road for Derby—or for Dover. How near the Prince then was to the goal of his desire, we at any rate shall never know. Many in England would have welcomed him as King; still more were waiting on the issue of events. But to gauge such chances is no easy matter. The assistance found in England had been disappointing. Lord George Murray, his lieutenant, was for caution; and, despite the Prince's protests, his followers now fell back upon the north. Crushed by the sense of failure, Charles himself lost heart. He grew moody and suspicious. He marched no longer at the head of his battalions; and, after a few weeks' inconclusive skirmishing round Stirling, he drew off into the moors of Inverness. There, half-starved and in sadly failing spirits, his army was brought to bay at Culloden and overwhelmed. When the ill day's work was over and the butchery done (for the brutal Duke of Cumberland would give no quarter), the Jacobite cause was left without a leader. Charles had fled.

There is here no space to relate the well-known story of his wanderings and escape; how Flora Macdonald, a plucky Highland lass, undertook to convoy him in woman's clothes to a harbourage in Skye; how under the female *alias* of Betty Burke he ran the hazards of the road, passed weeks of terror and privation on inhospitable moors, and owed his life on more than one occasion to the loyal self-sacrifice of friendly thieves. It is enough to say that at last he was picked up by a French frigate and safely landed with Lochiel upon the coast of Brittany. Over the sordid dissipations of his later life it is well to draw a veil. To the Scots at any rate he remained the brave young hero of that last bold bid for freedom—the unhappy 'Forty-five; and, whether in songs taught to their children or in tales told over the fire-side, the memory of the "young Chevalier" was affectionately cherished long after all real ground for grievance against England was completely gone.

The Triumph of the Union.—The Union had come to stay, and in the long run to prosper. The genius of the Scot has preserved until this day his separate racial character and sturdy independence; but it has also made him (as alone it could) a devoted and valuable servant of the common weal. Before ten years had elapsed after the 'Forty-five, Scots regiments had been enrolled under the British flag; and no troops could have fought better or more staunchly than did the Highlanders upon the Heights of Abraham. The Union too brought trade and industry across the Tweed. From being a people agricultural in

the main the Scots developed a great aptitude for business. Linen and woollen manufactories sprang up. Ironworks and shipyards were started on the Clyde; and from the Clydeside town of Greenock came the first effective steam engine, the invention of James Watt. By the close of the eighteenth century, in short, Scotland was fairly launched upon the course of prosperous enterprise and patient energy which has brought her into the very forefront of commercial progress, given her a full share and more than a full share in the administration of the Empire and the policies of state, and won for her sons the whole world over a reputation for cool commonsense, thoroughgoing efficiency and thrift.¹ Yet, whatever fortune brings him and wherever his lot be cast, the Scot remains eternally the Scot; and there is no worse insult that can be levelled at his pride than to be taken—hideous error—for an Englishman.

CHAPTER V

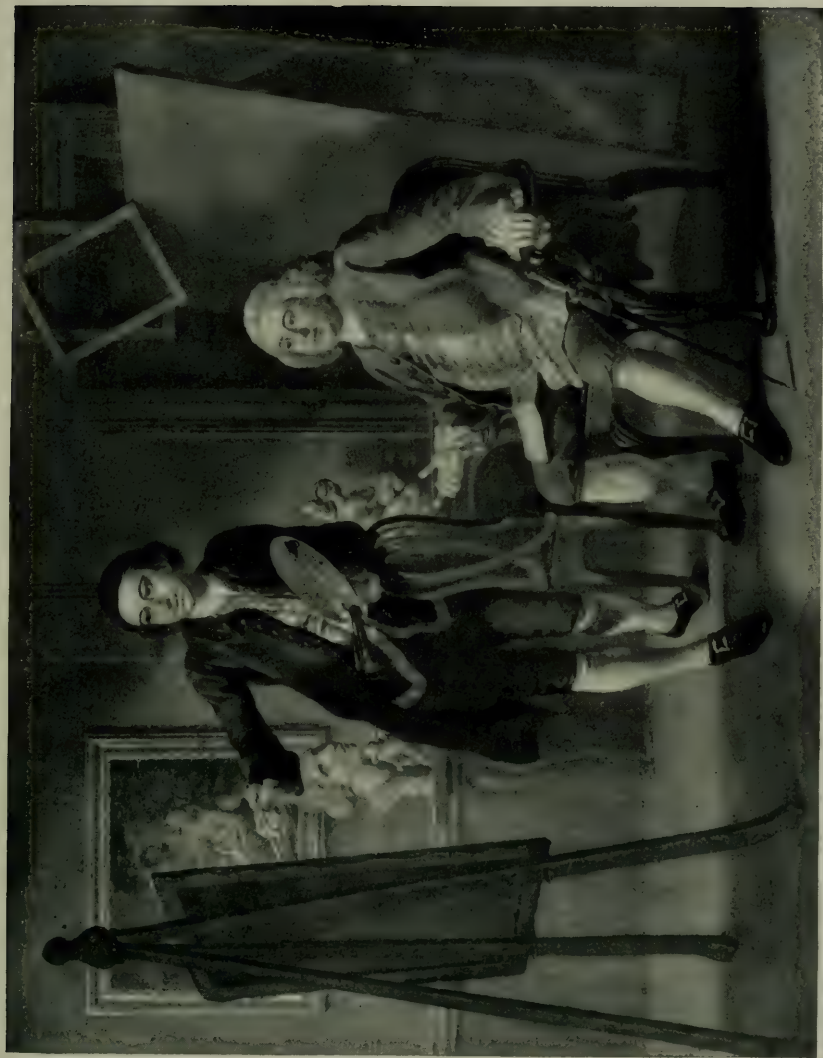
WALPOLE AND THE WHIGS

I

Whig Jobbery.—Mere flash-in-the-pan as it appeared to be, the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715 had none the less one important consequence. It utterly discredited the sentimental English politicians who still backed the House of Stuart.² To grumble against German George was one thing: to attempt to dethrone him was another; and, whether their disloyalty had taken active shape or no, it was quite clear that the Tories would have welcomed his dethronement. Seeing them, therefore, to be aiders and abettors of a cause which was ready to go the full length of actual treason, the nation henceforward would have none of them. The negotiators of the Treaty of Utrecht were hounded out of office. Both Harley and St. John had been more or less deeply involved; the former, now Earl of Oxford, was committed to the Tower; the latter fled abroad. The rout of their party was complete, and it was five and forty years before a Tory Government was suffered to sit at Westminster again. During that time the Whigs had the Administration to themselves, and, in the familiar expression, they “made hay while the sun shone.” The days were now gone by when men of

¹ The contempt in which Scotland was held by Englishmen was soon removed by the intellectual achievements of her sons. Dr. Johnson refused, half-humorously, to believe that any good thing could come from across the border. But, before the end of the century, Hume had stood out as one of the greatest of modern philosophers, and Adam Smith, the author of the “Wealth of Nations,” had made political economy into a science. Of the numerous Victorian statesmen who hailed from the north, it is scarcely necessary to speak.

² Another motive in their disloyalty to George lay in their perception that he would inevitably favour the Whigs and that his accession meant loss of power to themselves.



SIR ROBERT WALPOLE IN THE STUDIO OF FRANCIS HAYMAN

From the painting by Hayman in the National Portrait Gallery

various political views were admitted into office side by side; there were no advances or concessions made to Tory waverers, and from top to bottom of the Government departments no post was given to any but strict Whigs. The Ministry's monopoly of Crown appointments was in fact disgracefully exploited; not merely did they make Whig judges and Whig Bishops, but they dispensed to faithful henchmen a whole host of lesser jobs as custom-house collectors, Treasury clerks, Court chaplains, or even perhaps mere scullions in the royal kitchen.

Thus political patronage became a veritable system, and a means of assuring to the Ministry in power the comfortable prospect of remaining there. For votes and abilities were easily bought by the offer of some lucrative appointment. If one man seemed likely to prove a dangerous critic, his tongue was silenced by a timely pension; if another proved himself a loyal adherent, he was rewarded by promotion and his salary increased. Nor did the scandalous abuse stop short of bribery. Money passed freely. Few were above accepting what none demurred to give, and "all those men," in the scathing words of Walpole, "had their price." The Tories were almost crushed out of existence, and their numbers were frequently reduced to but three or four score votes. It was a sordid and discreditable business, and, though the struggle of the parties was perhaps a lesser evil than the sword-to-sword encounters of the previous epoch, yet it commands our admiration infinitely less. Politics in truth were becoming a mere game, and a dirty game at that. The men who ruled the country were no longer honest patriots or, what is at least something, honest partisans. They were simply subtle schemers out for their own hand and their own pocket. The Whig magnates, under whose influence this evil condition of affairs sprang up, were often able masters of state-craft and finance, but they owned neither principles nor consciences. Their party stood, as we have already seen above, for liberty at home and enmity to monarchical France abroad. Yet, during the next twenty years of Whig supremacy, they allowed England to stand by while France was bullying their old ally Austria, and, as for domestic legislation, they produced scarcely a single bill to prove the slightest interest in the people's welfare.¹ The fact is that, like the Tories, the great Whigs were mostly drawn from a wealthy, selfish, and conceited aristocracy. Many of them were great landowners recently made peers by a king who owed his crown to their support. Fine gentlemen no doubt they were, cutting a handsome figure in the dapper knee-breeches and powdered periwigs of their Court costume, living in stately mansions replete with every ornament of luxury or art, polished in manner, witty or grave in speech, often

¹ The one or two trifling exceptions to this statement serve only to emphasise the barrenness of Whig idealism. Trial for witchcraft was abolished in 1736, and Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753 set a certain check on hasty and ill-considered matrimony. By this law it was enacted that only a qualified minister of the Established Church might perform the marriage ceremony, and that only after due publication of the banns. Since, however, the Act did not apply to Scotland, impatient couples, who could afford the luxury of a post-chaise, frequently evaded the law by an excursion across the border to the notorious Gretna Green.

scholarly by taste or education, and able to compose a well-turned peroration for a speech in Parliament, or to quote a tag from Horace when the port went round. But, courtly cultured gentlemen as they were, they carried their heads too high to condescend beneath them. They cared little or nothing for the troubles and distress of those they governed. Wealth and the pride of rank had blinded them to the enormous responsibilities of their position; nor did they ever dream of being called to give account for the conduct of their stewardship. The so-called electors up and down the country had next to no hold over their policy, and the whole system of representative government was becoming little better than a farce.

The peers, of course, represented nobody except themselves, and the seats in the House of Commons were filled for the most part by men who owed their election entirely to the peers. Wholesale jobbery was the order of the day. The voters in each constituency were astonishingly few. In the so-called "rotten" boroughs where a once prosperous town-ship had dwindled to the dimensions of a village, their numbers could often be counted on one hand. Most of them were more or less at the mercy of my lord at the Big House. Generally they were his tenants, and, since votes were not then given by secret ballot, and since my lord knew well enough which way they cast their votes, it was as much as their security of hearth and home was worth to brave the consequences of his displeasure: there was sure, on the other hand, to be money going for those who voted as they were desired. It was therefore an easy matter for the big man to coax or to cajole his handful of dependants into electing the man whom he proposed. So the discreditable game went on, Whig Earls and Whig Viscounts jobbing obedient favourites into safe seats in a servile House of Commons, strengthening the solid phalanx of their Whig majority by each fresh addition of these party hacks, and, from the security of power which that majority afforded them, reaping a rich harvest in influence and money for themselves and a host of salaried appointments for their ambitious relatives or poor retainers. No wonder that the immediate upshot of the Whig régime was to produce in England a period of political stagnation and to undermine abroad the high prestige which the victories of Marlborough had won for her.

Parliament and King.—To check or change this grave abuse the Sovereign himself was powerless. If Anne had counted for little, the first two Hanoverians counted for still less. For one thing it is important to remember that both of them were thorough Germans. George I, who did not come to England till well on in middle age, was typical of the Teuton at his worst, with a coarse mind, disgusting manners, and a strong taste for vulgar pomp and ceremonial. George II, his son, who became King in 1727, tried hard to be a Briton and acquired a rich vocabulary of English oaths. But the German strain in him was never much disguised. Like the Kaiser Wilhelm, he possessed a veritable passion for designing uniforms. He strutted through life with the

self-important air of a Prussian sergeant-major on parade, and showed, in short, that, whatever his pretences, Hanover was his "spiritual home." Such monarchs could hardly be popular in England, and they knew it. The only justification for their presence at Whitehall was the absence of a more eligible rival, and, owing the crown as they did to the Whig politicians who had placed it on their heads, there was nothing for it but to leave the Whig politicians a free hand. Interference was, however, made the more impossible by their extreme ignorance of the country's politics and even of its language. George I talked no English, and, as his chief minister knew neither French nor German, all conversation had to be carried on in Latin, at which neither of the two was an adept. The inevitable followed. The King gave up attention at the consultation of his Cabinet, and became henceforward little better than an ornament or emblem of a power which was no longer his.

Cabinet and Premier.—The mere accident, as it may seem, of the first George's foreign speech and the second's foreign accent had thus the most profound and far-reaching effect upon the history of England's constitutional development. Hitherto the Cabinet or committee of leading ministers had been chosen by the King, and at the King's personal discretion. The men he chose were not of necessity agreed on policy, and we have seen how, in the so-called Cabal of Charles II, such agreement was neither expected nor desired. Nor in the last resort did the real responsibility belong to them. They were simply the King's servants and advisers. The ultimate decision in all matters lay with the King. Under the Hanoverian monarchs all this was changed. Henceforth the leading minister—Prime Minister he presently was called—began to choose the other members of the Cabinet himself, and more and more it became his principle in choosing that all those members should agree with one another and with him upon the main political issues of the day. In fact, there came to be a tacit understanding that they all should work together like a team in harness, and that, whatever act one member might commit, the entire Cabinet should be responsible therefor. Thus, if a Chancellor of the Exchequer bungles with a budget, or the Secretary for War mishandles a campaign, the other ministers must either shoulder the blame themselves and face the music, or they must throw the offender overboard by making him resign. Like Jonah's whale, no Cabinet can very long contain a man who disagrees with it.

The Prime Minister (though he himself did not assume that name) who first organized a Cabinet upon this principle was the great Sir Robert Walpole. He was a consummate master of the difficult art of keeping men together; and so successful was he in bending other wills to meet his own that for over twenty years, from 1720 to 1741, he maintained his position at the summit of affairs. Walpole was uniquely fitted for the political environment in which he lived. He had no ideals and no enthusiasms. The one thing he cared about supremely

was his sport. The letters, we are told, which he always opened first at breakfast were his gamekeeper's; and he began the parliamentary custom of a weekly holiday solely that he might go off to hunt his beagles in Richmond Park. Religion he had none; for he scoffed at all sects and philosophies by turns. His private life was no better than it should have been; and his public career was based, as we have seen, upon a system of unscrupulous wholesale bribery. His two merits were a great capacity for work and an extraordinary cool and level head. He never worried. He ran no risks. He was ashamed or afraid of nothing except failure; and that with him was rare.

Capitalists and Finance.—In one respect at any rate Walpole was at the moment an ideal man for Premier. He was a first-rate man of business; and business was the keynote of the age. England had long been a great trading country; but during the last century her trade had increased and multiplied by leaps and bounds. Fleets of her ships now touched at every continent and penetrated the ports of every sea. The quays of London, Bristol, and Plymouth were flooded with merchandise from all four quarters of the globe—sugar from Jamaica, tobacco from Virginia, rice from Carolina, porcelain and tea from China, coffee from Arabia, port from Portugal and lighter wines from France, cotton from the West Indies, silks, spices, and precious metals from the East. Thus wide-flung and productive was the activity of English ships. But ships cannot be built or manned except by money; and, whatever may be the ultimate proceeds of such enterprise, the merchant will first need funds wherewith to launch it. Hence there had arisen in England a new type of man, unknown or practically unknown during the Middle Ages, a capitalist class who did business not in the old-fashioned way from hand to mouth, but owning a considerable equipment of ships and warehouses and possessing a large reserve of funds on which to draw.

Further, since the outlay and the risks involved in such long distance voyages were often more than a single individual could well undertake, these men preferred to band themselves in companies, pooling their resources and sharing in the gains. Such companies had first been formed as early as the sixteenth century, and by this time they were fairly numerous. There was an East India Company founded under Elizabeth in 1600, an African company, a Russian company, and a company for trade in the Levant. These were all formed and managed under a charter from the Government, which, while limiting their scope in various ways, gave them immense advantages and in some cases a virtual monopoly of trade. The wealth which accrued to the company's shareholders was generally enormous. One voyage is said to have brought in a profit—exceptional no doubt, but not unique—of 4700 per cent! No wonder merchants grew rich.

Now finance on a large scale requires machinery to work it. So banks had been started with which deposits might be made. They took people's surplus cash into safe keeping, paid them a small interest

on the loan, and then recouped themselves by lending out the money so entrusted to them to other people at a slightly higher rate. The largest and most reliable of such banks was, of course, the Bank of England, founded in 1694 by a company of highly reputable and trusted shareholders. It had the great advantage of Government support which guaranteed its credit and allowed it to issue bank-notes made of paper in lieu of silver or gold. In return it was often expected to advance enormous loans to the Government itself. For the State had recently become the greatest borrower of all. The expense of maintaining a large army and conducting costly European wars could not be wholly met by year-to-year taxation. So the Government had appealed for loans to any who would lend them; and thousands of individual citizens as well as banks and companies became the country's creditors. The interest offered by the Government was well over six per cent; and at this rate the "War Loan" had proved so attractive that, by the time the Treaty of Utrecht was signed, the State had borrowed in all some *fifty-two million pounds*. To pay off such a sum out of the taxes soon proved to be an impossible ideal. The "National Debt" had come to stay; and the lenders on their part were well content to prolong their loan indefinitely, provided that the interest were regularly paid. Even this proved, however, a serious burden upon the taxpayer's pocket; and the reduction of the rate of interest was seen before long to be a crying need.

The South Sea Bubble.—Such was the condition of commercial enterprise and national finance when Sir Robert Walpole entered the political arena. His profound grasp of money-matters made him naturally a tower of strength; and his actual elevation to the premiership was due, in the first instance, to a serious fiasco in the other Whig ministers' finance. At this time the enormous Whig majority was divided into two unfriendly sections. On the one side was Sir Robert, who served under his brother-in-law, Lord Townshend. On the other side were Lord Stanhope and Lord Sunderland. In 1717 Townshend and Walpole were turned out of office, and went into more or less hostile opposition. Stanhope and Sunderland took up the reins; and the bungle which was soon to come was of their making. It fell on this wise. One of the results of the Treaty of Utrecht had been partially to open South America to English traders. A Company had been floated called the South Sea Company; and in the expectation of rich commerce and high dividends the public had gone mad on getting shares. The managers of the Company, puffed up by their success, now embarked upon a still more daring scheme. They approached the English Government with the audacious proposition that they should take control of the National Debt and administer it themselves. For this privilege they offered to pay the stupendous sum (which of course they did not yet possess) of seven million pounds. The temptation to the Government was strong, and the offer was accepted. It now remained for the South Sea managers to turn the transaction to their own advantage, and this

they were purposing to do as follows: To the holder of every share in the National Stock, they offered in exchange a share in the South Sea enterprise. Had the offer been universally accepted they would indeed have been in clover. Thenceforward the State would owe its enormous debt to them alone, and to them alone would pay a regular return at six per cent. The previous lenders, on the other hand, would have taken in exchange shares which, according to the South Sea trade's success or failure, might either be worth a fortune or worth—nothing. As a matter of fact, the latter was much nearer to the truth. South America was not a gold mine; but the credulous public¹ took the bait, fancying that it was, and that all who could get a share in the undertaking would find themselves made men. Thousands accepted the managers' dishonest offer. The Stock Exchange became the scene of a reckless gamble. Everybody was scrambling to get South Sea stock; bidding ran higher and higher and men were prepared to pay any price to get it, till shares which originally had been worth but one hundred pounds could soon scarcely be purchased at a thousand. Then the truth leaked out and the bubble burst. It was realised that South America's resources were not endless, and that, seeing the immense number of shareholders the Company had admitted, the profits, when divided among them all, would work out at almost nothing. The value of shares accordingly began to drop. Men sold out as eagerly as they had lately bought, and at whatever price they still could get. From a thousand to five hundred, and from five hundred to two, down the price came till at last it had nearly reached the point from which it started; and eventually men found that £135 was all that they could get for what had cost them three or four times as much a few weeks previous.

Thus thousands lost practically all their savings at a blow. Many were ruined; and the outcry was tremendous. The Whig ministers who had permitted the fatal deal with the National Debt were called to answer for it. Lord Stanhope, who was not above suspicion of having used his inside knowledge to speculate in shares, was seized with a sudden fit while replying to his critics, and fell dying in the House. Sunderland, his colleague, resigned office. Here was the opportunity for a sound financier. The country was horrified at the late ministers' incompetence and fraud; and every one was glad when Walpole stepped into their shoes. He soon restored the national credit so sorely shaken by the gross manipulation of the Debt. The Debt itself he took back out of the Company directors' hands and set it once and for all upon a firmer basis, first, by forming a reserve or sinking fund out of which

¹ How light-heartedly and foolishly the public of this date was ready to invest its money in any concern or company that came along is well illustrated by the prospectus advertisements of various companies which have come down to us; thus men were invited to subscribe to a new scheme "for making salt water fresh"; to another "for making quick-silver malleable"; a third "to discover perpetual motion and utilise it for machinery"; a fourth "to fatten hogs by a new process"; and, most wonderful of all, "to engage in a secret undertaking which shall be made public hereafter."

to pay it off by slow degrees,¹ and, second, by reducing the rate of interest to five and eventually to four per cent. Whig honour was thus redeemed; but one not too pleasant fact remains to be disclosed. Walpole himself had profited by the incident in more than power alone. He had made a lot of money out of South Sea shares by buying them when cheap and selling them out dear just before the final crash. No doubt he too had acted upon inside knowledge, and it is scarcely the mark of an honest politician to turn such opportunities to private gain. But Walpole was not an honest politician, neither was he on the other hand at the time of the transaction a minister of the Crown. He was not quite such a fool as that.

Imports and Excise.—In Walpole's ministry, lasting though it did for over twenty years, we shall look for no great or heroic measures of beneficent reform. England herself he left much as he found her. Abroad he was willing to do anything, however humiliating, to keep the precious peace. Yet Walpole had his mission none the less, and that mission, as might have been expected, dealt with finance and trade. He was, as must never be forgotten, a Whig, and, since the days when Shaftesbury had first founded the great party, the interests of the Whigs had always been intimately joined with the rich class of shopkeepers and merchants who had formed the backbone of the opposition to the Stuarts. Walpole, moreover, saw more clearly than did most that England's future depended on her trade. Hitherto the main idea of English politicians had been to make their country the sole market for colonial produce; and to this end the Navigation Act had laid it down that goods from English colonies should be carried exclusively on English ships or to the ports of England. Walpole aimed, however, at more than this. He aspired to making England the market of the world, and to achieve his purpose he thought it indispensable to remove some of the barriers which checked and hampered trade. Up to his time the taxation levied upon imports and exports was not merely stringent, but almost universal. A duty was levied at the water-side on practically everything that left England's shores or entered them; for the welfare of home industries was thought to be best served by keeping foreign manufactures out and domestic raw materials in. Walpole endeavoured, as far as he was able, to initiate a change. From over a hundred articles of export and nearly forty articles of import he removed the tax entirely. But he had another project still. This was his famous proposal to drop in certain cases the customs duty upon importation, and to substitute an "Excise duty" upon mere consumption. With a view to making England the central *depôt* of European commerce he proposed to admit tea, coffee, wines, and tobacco duty free. If they were subsequently consumed in England, an "Excise tax" was to be levied on their sale. If, however, as he himself intended, a great deal of them was re-exported to European countries, they would pass in and out of England duty free. Such a policy would doubtless

¹ As a matter of fact, it proved impossible to pay off a tenth part of the whole.

have brought to England a vastly increased volume of trade. But the idea was most unpopular throughout the country. Ignorant citizens, who already paid (though indirectly) a customs duty on spirits and tobacco at the port, could not abide the notion of an excise officer who would take a toll on every glass of wine they drank and on every pipe they smoked. The Englishman's liberties appeared to be invaded. A general cry was raised. Riots took place, and Walpole went almost in danger of his life. With characteristic tact he bowed before the storm.¹ The Excise Bill was passed for tea and coffee; but for spirits and tobacco it was eventually withdrawn. Perhaps, if the truth were known, the public had its reasons for resentment. Smuggling of taxed articles was at the time extraordinarily common, so that a large bulk of these commodities did in fact escape the vigilance of the customs-house official and come into the country duty free. It would have been less easy to elude the excise-man's watch upon the warehouse and the tavern; and many were well content that, once the obnoxious proposal had been defeated, the smuggler's illicit trade should go merrily on. English liberty demanded at least the privilege to cheat the law.

Though failing in this single measure, Walpole succeeded with the rest; and, in the long run, his policy built up a British commerce which has made it the envy of the world. Even the immediate results were nothing short of marvellous. In five-and-twenty years the total of British exports more than doubled. The trade with Jamaica alone at the end of that short period was very nearly equal to the entire trade with British American plantations just before it. Walpole had made the start; and his efforts towards Free Trade laid down the first foundations on which the later Whigs and still more recent Liberals were subsequently to build. While other nations have kept up protective tariffs and fostered domestic industries by penalising imports, England has flung wide her doors to the commerce of the world; and, whatever men may think of the present wisdom of this policy, none can deny that in the past it (coupled with sea power) has given her an incalculable advantage over her rivals and competitors in the great race for trade.

II

Pamphleteers and Periodicals.—Walpole's era was a time of peace bridging the interval between two periods of great wars. It was also a time of great prosperity; and the London of his day was a merry, bustling, energetic place. The sins of the Whigs sat lightly on its conscience; and Londoners had too much else to think about. Those who were not occupied in getting rich were occupied in talking; and conversation was the art peculiar to the age. Clubs at this date were rare; but taverns and coffee-houses did duty in their stead. There all

¹ Fear of arousing strong feeling among a population as yet none too whole-hearted in its devotion to the Hanoverian Monarch was probably at the back of Walpole's timidity.

the wits foregathered, gossiped away the time in brilliant chatter, or read the meagre sheets which told the news. Politics were now safe subject for discussion; and even the pen was no longer an instrument men feared to handle. Both Whigs and Tories kept their hireling writers who delivered fierce and venomous attacks in ink upon the opposing party. These appeared in newspapers, or more commonly in pamphlets, and the "pamphleteer," as he was called, was among the most powerful forces of the day. Some of them were inimitable masters of the English tongue and have passed into the roll of literary fame. There was Sir Richard Steele for instance, the dissipated, tippling, loveable "Dick," who received a title from the Whig government for the services he rendered, and who yet was seldom out of debt, being quite unable to keep a penny in his pocket. Side by side with Steele was his friend and fellow-writer, the courtly, gentle-mannered Joseph Addison. His reputation was first made by a poem entitled "The Campaign," written at the Whig ministers' request to celebrate the victory of Blenheim. Its success—far greater than its merit—brought Addison at once to the fore. He was given various posts under the Whig government, and under King George I became Secretary of State. But his real claim to fame lay in his prose writings. He and Steele combined in editing a journal first called the "Tatler," and later the "Spectator," which may well be called the parent of the modern periodical or magazine.

The "Spectator" was a small and modest news-sheet, issued three times weekly at the price of a single penny; but it invariably contained an essay upon current or literary topics, and these essays must always rank among the most perfect in the language. One series, written round the character of an imaginary squire, Sir Roger de Coverley by name, depicts the life and habits of the eighteenth-century gentleman seen at his best. It is a pleasant antidote to the unedifying story of Whig politics to follow the daily life of this honest, benevolent and dignified old man, as he attends the quarter-sessions at the neighbouring township, goes to Sunday morning service at his parish church, inspects the monuments and tombs of Westminster Abbey, or takes a turn upon the water to see the sights of Kew. A more ardent and outspoken Whig supporter than Addison or Steele was a man best known as the author of "Robinson Crusoe," Daniel Defoe. Defoe was a prince and father among journalists. He wrote innumerable pamphlets in an inimitable slap-dash style without too scrupulous regard for accuracy or truth; and once he was placed in the pillory (though happily not pelted) for an indiscreet attack upon the Church. As a writer of semi-historical fiction like "Robinson Crusoe," or of semi-fictitious history such as his "Journal of the Plague," Defoe stands almost without rival. To pit against these three Whig pen-drivers the Tories could produce but one great genius;¹ but he was more than a

¹ Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, a returned exile, was an equally bitter, and scarcely less brilliant, literary opponent of the Whigs.

match for all the three. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's in Dublin, was the most tremendous controversialist of his own or any other age. Cursed with the fiercest of tempers, and a sour melancholic disposition which bordered at times upon the verge of madness, Swift could throw into the words he wrote more blasting irony and biting sarcasm than any man perhaps that ever lived. It is as though his very pen had been dipped in vinegar and gall. Even the tale of Gulliver in Lilliput, by which he is best known, was itself a scantily veiled satire upon the politics and morals of his age. In another famous essay he suggested with every appearance of solemnity that superfluous Irish babies might be used to great advantage to supplement the scanty fare of their impoverished parents. Himself a disappointed and embittered man, he vented his spleen by depicting human nature in its most unpleasant and repulsive light.

Pope and the Grand Style.—The age which produced Swift, Addison, and Steele, was not merely in the special sense an age of prose.¹ In its matter-of-fact and even cynical outlook upon life, it was also essentially a prosaic age. Emotions and enthusiasms were scoffed at. Poetry did not thrive; and the one man whom everybody hailed as a true poet, Alexander Pope, was really little more than a supremely gifted versifier. Pope could turn a neat and pointed couplet, no man better; and he turned them by the thousand all in the same metre, which we call (by a singular misnomer) the "Heroic" couplet. He could play with words and use them as his puppets; but there was no divine fire, no depth of inspiration behind the stuff he wrote. To keep the rules of poetry was more to him than poetry itself; and the fashion which he set was followed by every one who called himself a poet. These men studied the rules of composition, rhyme, and scansion, till they thought of nothing but the rules; and, being generally great scholars and readers of the classics, the model which they copied was the poetry of Greece and Rome. Plays were written in the classic manner of Sophocles or Terence. Odes were composed in imitation of Horace or satires in the vein of Juvenal. And, as at the first Renaissance, the affectation of the old pagan phraseology was once more saddled upon English style. With these men the sun was no more the simple "sun," but the "Phaethon" or "Phœbus." A wood became a "grove," where "Dryads" and not English fairies danced. A young lady was invariably referred to as a "nymph." Literature, in a word, became stilted and unreal; and, as time went on, even English itself became contaminated with this meaningless classical tradition. It became the fashion to use long cumbrous words derived out of the Latin in preference to simple straightforward Anglo-Saxon words which would have served much better.

Dr. Johnson.—As the age of Walpole drew to its close, there came

¹ The excellence of the period's prose was due in part to the study and imitation of continental models. And the academic tendencies which resulted from French and Italian influences served equally to deaden poetic inspiration.

a young journalist to London who was to carry this unfortunate tendency much further still. Samuel Johnson was a vigorous and honest thinker; but he it was, more perhaps than any one else, who developed and popularised this artificial style of "Latinising" prose. His writing is grandiose, involved and overloaded by pompous rhetorical "classicisms."¹ In his great Dictionary, for instance, itself an invaluable work of stupendous industry and learning, he can find no better words in which to define a net than these: "a texture woven together with large interstices or meshes." The unconscious pedantry of such a definition sounds worse than foolish beside the Irishman's quaint, but far more picturesque description, "a lot of holes tied together by a piece of string." But that was Johnson's way. He always wrote himself like a ponderous lexicographer; and, as somebody once said about his characters, "he made the little fishes talk like whales." The artificial style which he helped to make so popular ran on through Gibbon the historian and other Georgian writers, till it has barely ceased in our own days to hamper and corrupt the natural vigour of the English tongue. Happily, however, for his reputation, Johnson did not talk as Johnson wrote. In conversation he could call a spade a spade, and not an "agricultural implement." Of a drama he could say quite simply "it has not wit enough to keep it sweet," even though the desire to give his phrase a more literary turn compelled the crabbed addition, "it has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction." It was not often, however, that his second thoughts were so ill-inspired as that. For as a talker he was marvellous, brimful of illustrations, metaphors and ideas, and never at a loss for a retort. His glorious sense of humour and his transparent honesty of purpose endeared him to a host of famous friends.

All the great ones of the day gathered about Johnson—Garrick, the actor, Sheridan, the playwright, Goldsmith, the novelist and poet, Reynolds the court-painter, Burke, Gibbon, Fox, and the man who made his own name great no less than Johnson's by the immortal biography he wrote of him, James Boswell. This brilliant circle met and talked and argued sometimes in the famous "Mitre Tavern," sometimes at the homes of the members of their "Club." But, whoever else was there, Johnson always reigned as their "unquestioned king." In his more truculent moods he could be a bully and a tyrant, brooking no contradiction, never acknowledging defeat and ready enough with the uncompromising retort of "Sir, you lie." A ruder man than Johnson never stepped, but beneath his rough exterior he had a heart of gold; and for that men honoured him and loved him. Himself as honest as the day, he expected honesty in others, and never shrank from exposing hypocrisy or cant. The hypocrisy of Whigs (since he was himself a thorough-going Tory) he took peculiar pleasure in denouncing; and he never truckled after the servile fashion of the times to either wealth

¹ This and the preceding sentence are good illustrations of a vocabulary drawn almost entirely from the Latin.

or rank. Over that town society, corrupted by its artificial standards and cynical contempt for all ideals, Johnson's vigorous championship of truth, honour, and religion passed like a healthy wind from country fields. In him the true spirit of England found its best expression; and though the national virtues of pluck, plain-speaking, and broad commonsense were also in him accompanied by the characteristic English failure to recognise the merits or the value of any other race, yet a narrow patriotism is better than none at all; and Samuel Johnson has a better title to be called a typical citizen of eighteenth-century England than many a man to whom the world awarded more solid recognition or a loftier pride of place.

CHAPTER VI

GREATER BRITAIN BEYOND THE SEAS

While Walpole was engaged in reorganising British national finances, and the idle wits of London carelessly gossiped of a thousand other things, war-clouds were meantime gathering over Europe which were to startle even the Whigs from their complacent slumber and strike England broad awake. The first bout of these new hostilities, which lasted from 1740 to 1748, was at most a half-hearted business; but the Seven Years' War soon followed (1756-63), and in that England's whole fortune was at hazard. The issue thus soon to be determined was nothing less than the mastery of distant continents; and during those years the British Empire was to be lost or won. Great fabrics spring often from insignificant beginnings; and, though British overseas possessions then at stake formed but a precarious foothold on the edge of vast unknowns—here a scattered group of exiled colonists, there a slave-plantation or a traders' post; yet these were the germs from which sprung a Greater Britain, destined to raise new nations into being or to tame and civilise the savage ways of old. And, before we turn to the story of the struggle which decided once and for all that these far-off lands should rest in England's possession, it is well worth while to consider briefly how they ever came to be in her possession at all.

Scope of British Enterprise.—There fall first, however, one or two observations to be made concerning the general character and method of these foreign acquisitions. In the first place, they came to England not as the result of a deliberate and far-sighted plan, but largely at haphazard. State encouragement, it is true, was frequently behind them. The King or Queen lent sometimes ships, more rarely money; and at least bestowed a vague blessing on the enterprise. But the whole initiative lay in reality with private individuals—whether a single enthusiast like Raleigh or the members of some joint-stock London company; and it was the personal audacity of generation after generation of adventurous Englishmen that established these early settle-

ments long years before the English Government gave serious thought to their maintenance, protection, or development. In the second place, England was very far from having the new continents entirely to herself. Spain and Portugal were in the field before her, and, thanks to the Pope's obliging dispensation, held a prior claim, as it were, to their possession. Thus the area open, even to England's earliest pioneers, was confined and narrowed down. The African coast was largely under Portuguese control; and in South America the Spaniards had carried their conquests far and wide. The virgin soil awaiting England's more tardy enterprise lay, therefore, in India and North America alone. Lastly, we must note that even between these two fields still awaiting trade and settlement there existed a wide and striking difference. India, on the one hand, was populous and hot. It had neither the climate nor the space to attract English settlers in large numbers; so there the chief opening was for trading depots only. North America, upon the other hand, offered better prospects. Its air was temperate and invigorating, its population sparse; so Englishmen in search of a new home turned more naturally across the waves of the Atlantic. North America accordingly became the scene of England's earliest experiments in colonisation proper; and to North America we will first turn our eyes.

NORTH AMERICA

Age of Exploration.—The history of English enterprise beyond the Atlantic falls into two clearly defined periods. The first, which covered practically the whole of the sixteenth century, was occupied in voyages of piracy and exploration; and it was not until that century was drawing to its close that any real attempt at permanent settlement was made. During those early and exciting days when scarcely a year passed without the discovery of some new land, England had not failed to take a leading part. It was a mere accident—due to the miscarriage of a letter—that Henry VII was too late to accept the offer of Columbus's services and that Columbus himself did not make his celebrated voyage under the English flag. Isabella of Castile secured that honour, and its fruition went to Spain. But, though the credit of discovering South America was thus forfeited to England, it was nevertheless a Bristol man, John Cabot, a Genoese by birth, whose search for an Atlantic route to India brought him, some five years later, against the forelands of the northern continent. During the century which followed this success British sailors never rested. Chancellor and Willoughby explored the Arctic Ocean for a north-east passage to the Orient; and Frobisher, the Yorkshireman, scoured the Greenland coasts for a north-western route. Meantime in southern waters there was piracy in plenty. The two Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake were busy making things uncomfortable for Spain. They looted Spanish galleons homeward bound; they pounced unexpectedly on Spanish ports; they even at times made daring inland raids on Spanish trade-preserves. What none,

however, of these men attempted was to capture land for England. It was not till 1583 that Sir Humphrey Gilbert disembarked on the Newfoundland coast, and, having in legal fashion cut a turf and taken "seizin," claimed the new possession for the English Crown. That single act was big with destiny. It marked the ending of one epoch—the epoch of Discovery. It heralded the beginning of a new—the epoch of Colonial Settlement.

Age of Colonisation.—This second period, in the course of which England's North American colonies were born, falls into three main phases. Chronologically they overlap. Geographically, as the map will show, they cover each a separate area of expansion. First came the effort to establish Plantations in the *South*—a commercial enterprise. Second came the influx of Puritan emigrants who settled *round Cape Cod*—a by-product of religious persecution. Third and last came the phase of deliberate and national aggression, in which England succeeded in linking-up and rounding-off her previous scattered holdings by annexing to herself the adjacent settlements of rival nations—during the seventeenth century the Spanish and the Dutch, during the eighteenth the French. The conclusion of this last phase, at the close of the Seven Years' War, left England in sole possession of the entire seaboard with complete liberty to expand westwards. North America, if only for a brief twenty years, was hers; Anglo-Saxon it has remained ever since. We must now sketch rapidly the story of these phases.

First Phase.—Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the man who planted the English flag upon Newfoundland, was lost at sea during his homeward voyage; but his colonising zeal was happily, in a large measure, shared by his half-brother and friend, Sir Walter Raleigh. Despite his eagerness to found a colony Raleigh was not permitted to embark himself; but two years after Sir Humphrey Gilbert's death he organised and dispatched an expedition for this purpose. The expedition pitched upon a spot somewhat south of the centre of the western seaboard and near the great inlet of Chesapeake Bay. As a tactful compliment to the Virgin Queen, his mistress, Raleigh's new colony was named Virginia. But this was not sufficient to ensure success. The first batch of settlers soon came home; and though a second batch was presently sent out they perished without trace. So the Virgin Queen's dominion went untenanted till she herself had died. Then, in 1607, a group of London merchants reopened the attempt. Serious mistakes were made. The "gentlemen" adventurers wasted much precious time in the fruitless search for imaginary gold-mines. Fever set in; and the party almost perished, when, in the nick of time, a man came out to pull the colony together. Captain John Smith, a boastful, breezy seaman, knew the methods which were needed. He set the "gentlemen" to work, sowed corn, built timber-houses, and even (if we may trust his story) softened the "cannibal" instincts of the Red Indian chieftain by making love to his dusky daughter! John Smith's arrival was, in fact, the turning-point. After various ups and downs the colony succeeded. The land was parcelled

out among settlers. Women were sent out to furnish them with wives; and, above all, the great discovery was made that Virginia was excellent soil to grow tobacco. Fifty years later, at the time of the Restoration, the population had mounted to 40,000 souls. The success of this plantation led naturally to others. In the reign of Charles I an extension was made northward, under the influence of Lord Baltimore, and, in honour of Charles's Queen, Henrietta Maria, was named Maryland. In the reign of Charles II a similar extension was effected to the south and



FIG. 33.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE COLONISATION OF NORTH AMERICA.

christened Carolina, after Charles. It remained for Oglethorpe, in the reign of George II, to carry England's boundary further south to the very border of Spanish Florida. This new addition was called Georgia; and with that the first phase ends.

These four Plantations, Virginia, Maryland, Carolina, and Georgia were, broadly speaking, all of a type. Each was founded under the patronage of the Crown. Each was named, as we have seen, after a king or a queen; and the men who founded and who managed them

were mostly Royalists by sympathy and not seldom Catholics by religion. But, more than this, the purpose which they served was one throughout. They were commercial undertakings, run in the interests of the main proprietors. There was no very particular inducement to take the ordinary Englishman across to fill them, and sufficient labour was not easy to procure. The only alternative, therefore, was to introduce slave labour; and throughout the Seventeenth Century there was continual transportation of West African negroes across the Atlantic to America. It is said that some 20,000 were commonly taken over in one year (though not to English colonies alone), and the horrors of the "Trade" were indescribable. The unhappy negroes of the Guinea coast, kidnapped by English raiders or purchased from the Portuguese and Dutch, were packed like sardines into special vessels, where they sat huddled in rows, half starving and often shackled to their seats. Thousands upon thousands died during the voyage: but even such a fate was preferable to the lot of their fellows who survived. Housed in filthy barracks, and set to work in gangs under the lash of brutal task-masters, they spent their miserable days in hoeing rice-fields, tending tobacco plants, or harvesting the sugar-cane. The colonies thrived upon the produce of their labours; but no wonder we are told that many of the slaves died young. The evil tradition lasted long. It survived the secession of the colonies from England and their independent existence as the United States; and only as recently as 1865 did Abraham Lincoln and the Northern States defeat the Southern States and compel them to abandon it.

Second Phase.—The Northern States which won the "Civil War" and enforced this act of justice, were originally peopled by a very different stock and in a very different manner from the Plantation States of the South. To face the rigours of the colder climate, where winter brought often continuous frost and snow and bitter winds, called for the most sterling qualities of English grit; nor could the requisite determination and endurance have anywhere been better found than in the men who upheld the great cause of civil and religious freedom against the tyranny of the Stuarts. Men who for conscience sake would exchange a comfortable home in England for the inhospitable wilderness of these northern coasts were the stuff of which true pioneers are made; and never did pioneers accomplish their work better than the Puritan emigrants who crossed the ocean during the seventeenth century. Happily, too, for the future of the new continent these colonists represented some of the best stock and the finest traditions of the mother country. Nearly all came from southeast England; fifty per cent from the counties of Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire. Many were men of substance, small gentry, yeomen farmers and master craftsmen. All were equally prepared by a tradition of sturdy independence to shift for themselves and turn their hand to whatever task proved needful. The land was divided into freeholds; and feudalism took no root beyond the sea. At the same time, being accustomed to the life of small towns or large villages such

as abounded in the districts above mentioned, they carried the habit to America; and the townships which sprang up in New England were invaluable in consolidating the strength of the colonies. Independence of spirit on the other hand led to much local jealousy and disunion; and while their religious system was intensely democratic, their Puritan bigotry allowed no toleration of free consciences. Lastly, they were a prolific stock, and their descendants not merely spread and expanded, but in a large measure maintained the lead in the life of the growing population of later years, setting its tone and its ideals.

The first experiment was on a tiny scale. In 1620 two ships, the "Mayflower," and the "Speedwell," set out together, manned by a party of Lincolnshire dissenters who had for some years previously been sheltering in Holland. The "Speedwell" met with an accident and was forced to put back to port; but the "Mayflower" persevered and eventually struck land some 500 miles to the northward of Virginia, and disembarked about a hundred souls in the neighbourhood of Cape Cod. The settlers christened their settlement New Plymouth after the port in England at which they had last touched. They chose a governor, and appointed Miles Standish as military commander. A constitution was furthermore drawn up, and they organised their small community on strictly socialistic lines. All were to share and share alike in the produce of their toil. Nevertheless, for these brave idealists there were troublous times ahead. Food was scarce. The labour was severe; and sickness thinned their ranks. Worse still, the selfishness of human nature hampered the smooth development of their socialistic schemes; and only then did the colony begin to thrive when the strict rules were relaxed and every man was permitted to enjoy the fruit of his own toil. Meanwhile the situation of their fellow Puritans at home had gone from bad to worse; and the persecutions of Archbishop Laud produced in 1630 a fresh wave of emigrants. East Anglians for the most part, they founded Massachusetts and gave to its capital the name of Boston, in memory of the port in Lincolnshire. By 1641, when the Civil War broke out and checked the flow, some 20,000 persons had passed over the Atlantic; and some, more adventurous than the rest, had pushed inland and founded the settlements of Connecticut and New Haven.¹

The group of four Puritan colonies thus founded, called two by English and two by Indian names,¹ formed now a fairly solid and united whole. There were religious differences, it is true, and some extremists of the "Independent" type went off to Rhode Island and there founded a colony in which complete liberty of worship might be practised. The rest, however, worked well enough together for a time. They developed a lively trade in fur, salt fish, and timber with the Virginian group of colonists and with the mother-country. For purposes of government the four settlements united in a confederacy or league, each sending delegates from its own Parliament to consult for the common interest of the whole. Joint action was especially desirable in matters of defence.

¹ Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven.

The native Indians were a menace from which they were seldom free. Lithe figures flitted shadow-like behind the forest tree-trunks; painted faces peered at them through the thick undergrowth; and sometimes, when their watch was momentarily relaxed, there would come a sudden raid; the tomahawk would claim its victims, and there were tales of hideous torture inflicted on unhappy whites who fell into the red men's hands. Nor was the Indian the only enemy. To the south the Dutch had planted a colony in the long gap which divided the Puritans from the Virginian group; and to the north the French were busy exploring the St. Lawrence Valley, and ambitiously pushing inland on their rear. Such rival activities could not go long unobserved, and even the English government took note of them. This brings us to our third and final phase, the phase of national conquest.

Third Phase.—Neither the Tudors nor yet the early Stuarts had thought it necessary to take a very active part in overseas expansion. They had given the colonists approval, sometimes provided ships; but left the rest to private enterprise. No official campaigns were undertaken on the far side of the Atlantic until Cromwell came. His policy, however, was much more ambitious; and during his war with Spain (1655) he sent a fleet across under Penn and Venables to operate among the West Indian Islands. Of these islands the only two which reach considerable size, Cuba and Hispaniola (otherwise known as Hayti or San Domingo), were already in Spanish hands. But a much smaller one, Jamaica, though claimed, had not been colonised; and against it the English Admirals, ignominiously repulsed at Hispaniola, delivered a second and more successful attack. The island fell to them almost without a blow, and has remained in British possession ever since. At first it was chiefly valued as a convenient base from which English buccaneers—Henry Morgan and the rest—could prey upon the Spanish ports and trade routes. As time went on, however, the sugar industry was started, and, thanks to slave-labour and the tropical conditions, thrived exceedingly. By the middle of the eighteenth century Jamaica had become the most productive of British western settlements. Cromwell's new policy of colonial conquest was not allowed to drop; and, when in Charles II's reign England went to war against the Dutch, she took the opportunity to grab their North American possessions (1664). Occupying as these did the vacant space between England's northern and her southern settlements, their capture enabled her to bridge the awkward gap and link up the Puritans and planters in one continuous line. By way of compliment to the Duke, King Charles's brother, one part of this new addition was re-named New York; the more southern part became New Jersey.

The tendency to push inland, of which we spoke a little while ago, was now continued. In 1682 the quaker William Penn, son of the Admiral and a protégé of King Charles, was allowed a grant of land lying westwards of New York, and there he founded on religious lines a colony known, after himself, as Pennsylvania. But England was not, as it so

happened, the only nation that was pushing westwards. The French also were making a bid for the interior; and they even threatened to be before England in the race. As early as the middle of the sixteenth century French explorers had sailed up the St. Lawrence River; and, about the same time as England was colonising Virginia, they colonised Acadia (or Nova Scotia as we call it) at the St. Lawrence mouth. Soon after a young French sailor named Champlain had founded the city of Quebec, and, despite the opposition of unfriendly Indians, French traders had pushed still further up the river and established a settlement at Montreal. It was not, however, till the reign of Louis XIV that the colony began to forge ahead. Colbert, the great Minister who was Mazarin's successor, perceived its possibilities and laid far-reaching schemes. Settlers were sent out. Quebec and Montreal were fortified; and a vigorous exploration of the interior was begun. The result was startling. In 1682 a Frenchman named La Salle moved up past the Great Lakes, struck south to the upper reaches of the Ohio, travelled down it till he reached the Mississippi, and so emerged at the opposite end of the continent, upon the Gulf of Mexico. As a crowning touch to this stupendous feat, he claimed the lower basin of the Mississippi for the King of France and dubbed it Louisiana. How great a menace to England's coastal settlements was here foreshadowed is obvious enough. By working south from Canada and north from Louisiana, the French could encircle England, pin her at any rate to the seaboard, and some day maybe crush her altogether out; and, had their numbers been at all proportionate to their ambitions, such must have been England's fate.

But the French as a people did not take kindly to the task of colonisation; few volunteers went out as settlers; and the effort from first to last came almost wholly from the Government. Even so a manifest advantage lay with a Government which at least knew its mind. The French worked upon one plan dictated from Versailles. The English colonists, upon the other hand, lacked a united policy. Jealousies distracted them, and even the confederacy of the four Puritan states had by now been broken up; and the home Government afforded them no clear lead. The result was that by the middle of the eighteenth century the French, after various border wars and skirmishes, had gained the upper hand. They had won the friendship and even the alliance of many Indian tribes. These they were prepared, if necessary, to use in war; and they had garrisons of their own, commanded by officers sent out from France. Meanwhile their grip over the disputed hinter-land was growing yearly tighter; and a scheme was now afoot to construct a chain of forts down southwards from the lakes and along the valley of the Ohio. Such a design, had it succeeded, would have secured the whole hinter-land for France. In other words, the crisis was fast approaching by which should be decided the future of the northern continent. Whether France or England should possess it hung uncertain. Then England awoke from her slumber. Fate still held out the offer and it was grasped by Pitt.

INDIA

Compared with America, India was, as we have said, a thickly-peopled country. It was a country with an ancient and historic past. Its civilisation, though of an Oriental type, was already centuries old. Its numerous races were strangely intermingled and confused by a long series of immigrations. The bulk of the inhabitants were Hindus, a feeble backward race that had been settled in India since the earliest times of which record has come down. Their religion, a curious mixture of belief in one and many gods, had concentrated all the power in the hands of their chiefs and priests. The masses, ignorant, impassive, and superstitious as they were, had been taught to render a servile homage and obedience to the sacred caste of Brahmins, or, as the claim was, "god-born" holy men. For the folk of lower caste to marry a Brahmin, handle the food or water that a Brahmin was to swallow, touch him, or even approach within measurable distance of his person, was utterly forbidden; and the observance of these religious laws about pollution had become the principal rule of a Hindu's existence.

No race perhaps in the whole world has suffered more utter degradation from the abuse of class. But this was not all; for in the course of time the Hindu peoples had been forced to submit to yet other masters besides Brahmins. About the same epoch as the Norman conquest, when the Turks were occupied in overrunning Palestine and capturing Jerusalem, a similar zeal for conquest had arisen among their fellow-Mohammedans in Central Asia. Hordes of these fierce fanatics had swept south over the mountains which encircle India and taken possession of its plains. The conquest brought no peace. All through the Middle Ages princes rose and fell, fought and murdered one another, and preyed the while upon the helpless, long-suffering Hindus beneath them. At length in 1526 a last great Mussulman conqueror descended upon the distracted country from the north. Babar, the "Mongol," after a couple of fierce battles brought the whole of Northern India under his sway and founded the famous line of Mogul emperors. Ruling from Delhi as their capital, and surrounded by a court of such luxury and splendour as even the Orient has seldom witnessed, these cruel and grasping tyrants lorded it over India for just on two hundred years. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, their star was waning fast. A bloodthirsty race of Hindu mountaineers, named the Mahrattas, was openly defying their authority, and its marauder bands were spreading terror and devastation far and wide. In 1707 died Aurungzebe, last of the great Mogul potentates, and with his death the mighty fabric of their Empire collapsed like a pack of cards. The Nabobs or provincial viceroys of the Mogul emperors continued here and there to maintain an independent throne—in Oude, Bengal, the Carnatic, and elsewhere. But the glory had departed. All semblance of unity was gone; chaos reigned. India awaited a new master, and England's hour had struck.

Rivals in India.—As in the case of America, England had first gone to India for the sake of trade; and here too, as there, another nation was before her. The earliest European¹ to circumnavigate the Cape and cross the Indian Ocean had been a Portuguese, Vasco da Gama by name; and the discovery had given to his countrymen a virtual monopoly of Indian trade. Throughout the sixteenth century the spices and delicacies of the East had been conveyed to Europe in Portuguese “carracks” or merchantmen; and the growing chain of Portuguese trade depots on the coasts of Africa and India had brought immense prosperity to that small race. It was not, however, fated to last long. Shortly before the year of the Armada Portugal had been merged under the crown of Spain; and she shared Spain’s swift decline. India was now open to the competition of the world, and three nations entered for the prize. First, in the year 1600 there was launched in London city that famous speculative venture—the most momentous perhaps of all commercial undertakings in England’s history—the East India Company. The merchants who founded it built better than they knew; for upon this slender foundation has risen in the lapse of time that great Empire which to-day controls the destiny of three hundred million souls. For a century or more, however, the enterprise remained upon a modest scale. Trading ports or “factories,” as they were called, were started at three points—at Surat in what is now the province of Bombay, at Madras and Fort St. David on the lower eastern coast, and at Fort William or Calcutta near the mouth of the river Hugli in the province of Bengal. Trade was brisk; for to these depots the natives gladly brought their wares—spices, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, pepper, and such like commodities. The Mogul potentates or their provincial governors looked with no unfriendly eye upon the useful strangers and the profits of the Company steadily increased. But, as we have said, there were other rivals in the field; first the Dutch, who held, and still hold to this day, many ports among the islands of the East Indian Archipelago—Java, Sumatra, the Moluccas, and at that time Ceylon; later, and more formidable by far, the French. For the French, like England’s merchants, had settled on the mainland. Their headquarters were at Chandernagore, hard by Calcutta, and at Pondicherry, barely a hundred miles distant from Madras. The two rival companies were thus working cheek by jowl, and, as may easily be imagined, there was small love lost between them.

Such was the position when in the early years of the eighteenth century the last great Mohammedan ruler, Aurungzebe, died, and the Mogul Empire went to bits. With that same quick instinct for an opportunity which they had shown in their Canadian enterprise, the French officials soon grasped the situation. They cultivated many tactful friendships with the now independent Nabobs of the old Mogul provinces, and even sheltered them, when need arose, against their powerful enemies, the Mahratta hordes. Their power thus grew apace;

¹ Greek and Phœnician travellers had in ancient days performed this voyage.

and in 1741 there came out from France a governor who was to reduce this new diplomacy to a fine art. If any man deserved to conquer India, it was Dupleix. Far ahead of his age and with vast schemes revolving in his busy brain, he set to work to build up a French influence equal and more than equal to England's. He made alliances with friendly Nabobs and supported claimants to disputed thrones. He paraded himself in native dress to impress the native eye and vied with Oriental princes in the splendour of his pomp. He enlisted whole regiments of native soldiery, and, what is more, he summoned out from home French officers to drill them. In the face of such activity the English Company lagged far behind. As with America, the home authorities remained completely blind to the dangers of the situation. The only British troops in India—besides a handful of Sepoys—were a couple of hundred Europeans in the Company's employ. The only man worthy to win the title of an officer was occupied at the time in adding up accounts as a junior Company's clerk. So true is it that Fortune deals kindly with England's habitual bungling, and that she, as they say, had won her Empire "in a fit of absence of mind."

CHAPTER VII

THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

Although in 1739 the chain of French forts upon the Ohio had not as yet been planned, and although two years still remained before Dupleix should arrive at Pondicherry, yet in either quarter the threats of French hostilities were scarcely veiled. "France the enemy" was written so large and so obtrusively over the course events were taking in three continents that not even Walpole himself could have been wholly blind to the menace. War was in the air. Yet during the last twenty years nothing whatsoever had been done to prepare for its arrival. England's army had been reduced to a mere handful. Her fleet, though somewhat better, was still inadequate; and (most lamentable perhaps of all) she had not a friend in Europe. Such was the result of Walpole's policy of drift or *laissez faire*.¹ France on her part, however, had never let things bide, and she was now working hand in glove with Spain to oust England from her position on the seas. Though Louis XIV himself was dead and gone, his great-grandson, Louis XV,² was now seated on the throne, while his grandson, Philip, had been King of Spain since the Treaty of Utrecht. The two kinsmen monarchs had naturally enough a secret understanding, and on the strength of it Spain was beginning to make herself unpleasant to England. "Peace-

¹ Walpole's neglect of army and fleet was in part at least due to his unwillingness to tax the richer classes whom he feared might, if alienated, revive their sympathy for the Stuart cause.

² Both his son, the Dauphin, and his grandson had died in rapid succession.

ful" English merchants, trading in South American waters, were subjected to all sorts of interference. Rumour had it that some had actually been arrested, tortured, and imprisoned. Feeling ran high in London, and when a certain Captain Jenkins appeared one day before the House of Commons and produced, neatly wrapped in cotton wool, an ear, said to have been lost in an affray with Spanish coastguards, public indignation burst all bounds. The war fever swept Walpole off his feet. Against his better judgment and very much against his taste, he sent British ships across to attack the offending Spaniards in the west. He scored an initial triumph by the capture of the town of Portobello, he met with a severe rebuke at Carthage, muddled on half-heartedly for three years more, and finally in 1742 retired from office amid the jeers of the vulgar populace and to the genuine relief of all good patriots. So fell the great "Peace Minister," and so ended the peace which he had so assiduously preserved for nearly a quarter of a century. If war was what men wanted, they were very soon to have their bellyful. "They ring the bells now," Walpole had said at the first outbreak of hostilities, "presently they will be wringing their hands"; and he was right.

Carteret and German Alliance.—The war with Spain dragged on, but that France, not Spain, was the true enemy was clearly seen by the man who now took from Walpole's hands the control of British affairs. John Carteret knew Europe like a book. For a Whig of his time, he had an amazingly wide outlook, and, what was odder still, he was entirely honest. In the dirty game of party politics he took no interest whatsoever, and, instead of devoting all his energies to strengthening the Whig position at Westminster, he desired rather to strengthen England's position in the world before the final day of reckoning came with France. So whereas Walpole had chosen to ignore the continent, Carteret would not. He revived the old policy of the earlier Whigs—the policy of Marlborough, King William, and the rest—to *keep France down in Europe by keeping the Empire up*. In this way and in this way only could the balance of power be properly maintained, and, if such had been England's necessary safeguard in the past, it was doubly necessary now. Throughout the wars of William and of Marlborough British interests had long been rooted in alliance with Austria and the German States, and, now that the King of England was ruler of Hanover as well, fresh ties of mutual interest had been forged. England and Germany—a united Germany—must stand together against French aggression. Such was the dream and goal of Carteret's diplomacy.

Dettingen and Carteret's Fall.—But Carteret came too late, and his was an empty dream. For, shortly before his entry into power, two events had happened which, between them, shattered it to smithereens. First, in 1740, the old Austrian Emperor died and, dying, left all his vast dominions to a girl. That it was a dangerous experiment was obvious, and, anticipating trouble, the Emperor had taken such precautions as he could. By a treaty, entitled the "Pragmatic Sanction," he had

got the European powers to guarantee the safe succession of his daughter, and she, Maria Theresa, thus entered upon her heritage unchallenged. Yet the difficulties before her were immense. "Emperor" of the German States she clearly could not be, and even her husband's claim was more than doubtful. Her scattered dominions—Austria, Bohemia, the Lower Netherlands, Naples, and Milan¹—possessed no unity, no cohesion for defence. Half of them were exposed to an attack from Spain or France, and both Spain and France regarded them with avaricious eyes. These two were powerful enemies; yet Maria's greatest danger was to come from neither Spain nor France. It came from the ambitions of a fellow German prince. In the same year that the old Emperor died there had succeeded to the throne of Brandenburg and Prussia a young man whose name was Frederic. Now, for one very good reason, Frederic was not likely to prove a comfortable neighbour to Maria. His father, Frederic William, had been possessed by a sort of military mania, and had devoted his life to collecting giants from every land in Europe to form his famous regiment of Potsdam Guards. The son, who shared his father's taste for soldiers, thus inherited along with it a formidable army; nor was he slow to find a use to which to put it. Frederic was one of those men who either make or ruin nations. He was conscious of his own military genius; he was equally confident in the strength of his new army; and it was impossible for him to rest content with the inglorious rôle of a petty German princeling. His life's ambition was to make the names of Frederic and of Prussia feared in Europe; and in this he certainly succeeded. He shrank from no violence, robbery, or intrigue which might assist him in fulfilling his desires. He feared the laws of neither God nor man; and the results of his audacity are with us still. Frederic not merely founded the power of modern Prussia, he conceived and handed down to his descendants the doctrine of modern Prussianism that might is right. He was the model no less than the ancestor of the Kaiser Wilhelm II. To such a man the weak are natural prey, and the accession of the young Maria Theresa awoke in him the appetite for conquest. Frederic cared nothing that his word was already pledged by the Pragmatic Sanction to support her title to the throne. Treaties to him were merely "scraps of paper"; and before many weeks were out he struck his blow. He claimed from Maria—with scarcely a shadow of legality—the province of Silesia which lay upon his borders. Upon refusal he marched in his well-drilled army almost unopposed and took possession of Silesia out of hand. That blow, so swift, so unexpected, so unscrupulous, changed the whole future course of European politics.

Such was the condition of affairs with which Carteret was faced in 1742. All Europe was in arms. France, ever on the watch for what pickings she could get, had joined in the attack on helpless Austria, had agreed with Bavaria for a division of the spoils, and sent an army

¹ The three last-named provinces had been ceded by Spain to Austria under the Treaty of Utrecht.

east along the Danube. Maria Theresa, thus beset on all sides, appealed despairingly for English help. Every consideration of chivalry and interest prompted a response to her appeal; yet succour sent to her meant enmity to Frederic, and this, above all things, was what Carteret dreaded. He did his best. He persuaded Maria to abandon her claim upon Silesia, and thus healed in part, though only for a time, the dangerous German breach. This done, he set himself to combat France and to save, at any rate, the Austrian Netherlands. Once again, as in the days of Marlborough, an English army was dispatched to Flanders. Austrian troops joined it. A contingent from Hanover was summoned, and King George himself eventually arrived to command the united forces of his two dominions. The allied army's strategy was bold; in main outline, it was a repetition of Marlborough's march to Blenheim. But Marlborough's own genius was no longer present, and the British forces came within an ace of irretrievable disaster. Leaving Flanders, they marched south along the Rhine, cut in between the two French armies campaigning against Austria, and then, thanks to the King's pig-headedness, were actually cut off themselves at Dettingen. The English infantry, however, fought far better than their leaders led. George himself showed great personal courage in the battle, and Dettingen ended in an English victory and a severe French defeat. This success notwithstanding, Prussia was still a most uncertain quantity, a more than doubtful friend: Carteret's dream of a solid coalition against France remained a castle in the air, and already the opportunity, such as it had been, was passing from his hands. His two years of power had won him neither credit nor popularity at home. Men said that he was sacrificing English interests for the interests of Hanover. Mean Whig intrigues were brought to bear against him, and, while he had never stooped to buy support in Parliament, his enemies were busy buying votes to overthrow him. In the autumn of '44 this splendid statesman fell, and with his fall all hope of permanently reuniting Austria and Prussia against France had disappeared.

Austria Alienated.—The men who took Carteret's place at the head of the English Government, and who retained that place for the next dozen years, were the two Pelham brothers, the one Henry Pelham, the other Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle. Clever hands at the sordid political game of corruption and intrigue, incompetent administrators at home, and worse than incompetent abroad, they were typical of the Whig party at its worst. They spent a handsome fortune in securing their majority in Parliament; they collected round them all the brains and influence that money could command; and meanwhile they allowed England for twelve years to go steadily to the dogs. The result was that nearly everything went wrong. In '44 Frederic and Maria Theresa fell out once more and came to actual blows. In '45 the fear which had recently hung over England of a French descent upon her shores was thrown into the shade by the more immediate menace of Prince Charlie's Scottish rebellion. And

how near that came to upsetting George's throne we have already seen. In the same year British forces out in Flanders were severely punished by the French Marshal Saxe at Fontenoy; soon afterwards they were brought home to England; and the Austrian Netherlands were largely overrun. In India equally England was worsted by Dupleix and lost Madras. In America alone, where her colonists achieved the capture of the French port of Louisburg, the key to the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, did England have any glimmer of success. The wonder is that, when in '48 a peace was finally patched up at Aix-la-Chapelle, England and her Allies did not come off considerably worse. England gave up Louisburg, it is true; but she got back Madras. Maria Theresa let Frederic have Silesia; but she kept the Austrian Netherlands herself. France, on the other hand, scored very little. Her trade had suffered severely from England's sea-supremacy; despite her victories in Flanders, she had made no headway against Austria in the east. The fact was that, although not beaten, she was tired. The "War of the Austrian Succession" thus ended in a species of drawn fight. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was no permanent settlement. The peace was at best a truce and barely that. During the eight years' breathing space that followed, Englishmen and Frenchmen still squabbled, skirmished, and intrigued, in both America and India, just as if the parent countries were openly at war; and it was plain to anyone who had the eyes to see it that sooner or later—and it might be very soon—the day was coming for the renewal of the challenge. When it came the struggle would be fiercer, the issue of world empire squarely joined; and where in that coming day could England look for friends to stand at her side? This much at least was certain. The old policy begun by William, continued by Marlborough, and revived in 1742 by Carteret, was no longer possible. The Pelhams were no statesmen; but not even a statesman could now heal the deadly breach between Austria and Prussia. Frederic, by one fatal act, had upset the balance of European equilibrium. France, though so recently his ally, feared him, Austria with better reason feared him too; and, when just eight years later the great struggle was reopened, Austria and France were to be found united. Blenheim, Oudenarde and Dettingen had gone for nothing. England had lost her ally.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

I. THE RISE OF PITT

In the spring of 1754 Henry Pelham died; but the tradition of incompetence lived on. His brother, Thomas Pelham, the Duke of Newcastle, took up the vacant post, bribed his way through a general election in the autumn, and settled down complacently to enjoy the sweets of



WILLIAM PITT, FIRST EARL OF CHATHAM

From the painting by Richard Brompton



CHARLES JAMES FOX

From the painting by Hickel

office. English politics were stagnant; and the only tangible achievement of this egregious pair of brothers was to reform the Almanac.¹ Though the long-standing error of mediæval calculations had long since been recognised by the rest of Europe, England had not accepted the correct "Gregorian Calendar" instituted by Pope Gregory in 1582. She was still in fact eleven days behind continental reckoning. In 1752, however, the Pelhams had hit upon the bright idea of falling into line. A Bill was passed through Parliament. The date was changed and the eleven days between September 3rd and 14th were cancelled. But, though the Pelham ministry might reform the calendar, they did not reform their ways. They put on the clock for other people, but they themselves remained incorrigibly behind the times. England under their influence went fast asleep. Meanwhile, in his palace at Potsdam, Frederic of Prussia was making merry with his friends. He had gathered to his court a host of foreign favourites, authors, musicians, poets, and artists; and in the company of these he supped and jested, attended operas and concerts, wrote bad verses, practised the flute and fiddle, and produced, in short, a very mediocre imitation of the late lamented "grand monarch" of Versailles. So wagged the world in England and in Prussia. But such trifling was all upon the surface, hiding a deep unrest. Behind the appearance of tranquillity war-clouds were gathering. It was the lull before the storm. In the last days of '55 and the first of '56 the lightning flashed on suddenly. It had somehow come to Frederic's knowledge that a secret understanding had recently been formed between Austria, Russia, Saxony, and (if he guessed rightly) France to combine and wipe out Prussia from the map of Europe. Without a friend or ally on the continent, Frederic turned anxiously to England. To King George's delight he offered to safeguard Hanover on condition that Hanover in return should safeguard him. The bargain was concluded. A Defensive Alliance was signed—and the storm was upon England.

Minorea and Byng.—France, which, throughout the eight years' interval of so-called peace, had never ceased to plague England in the colonies, and now felt doubly warlike and ambitious in virtue of the new *rapprochement* with her old Austrian foe, took up the Anglo-Prussian challenge readily enough. Speed was all to her advantage, and she prepared forthwith to deal a blow at England by attacking the island of Minorea (England's by right of conquest since the Treaty of Utrecht). Minorea was for England a valuable base in Mediterranean waters. The English divined the French intention, and out went a fleet under Admiral John Byng for the preservation of the precious island—only to arrive four weeks too late and to find the French already in possession. Byng showed little spirit. He refused to risk a landing, failed to make good in a brush with the French navy, and finally put back into Gibraltar beaten—and without a fight.

¹ Their administration was also marked by another event of some interest and importance, the founding of the British Museum.

In England the news of Minorca's fall was received with exaggerated sensations of disgust, bewilderment, and terror. The descent of French troops upon England's southern coast was momentarily expected. Rumour ran wild; and ugly tales of disaster in British colonies fretted the public's nerve. At such a moment men will instinctively desire to find a scapegoat. There was a howl for Byng's court-martial; and the outcry took effect. The unfortunate admiral was duly tried, found guilty on the score of "not having done his utmost" and (such was then the severity of naval discipline) condemned to death. Six weeks later the House of Lords confirmed the sentence, and Byng was shot on his own quarter-deck in Portsmouth Harbour—*pour encourager les autres*, as the French cynic, Voltaire, said. Meantime, however, the prospect of Byng's blood was not enough to satisfy the indignant populace; and before he died the Newcastle Cabinet which sent him to Minorca had been bitterly assailed. Their handling of the crisis had, in fact, been dilatory and nerveless, and they had certainly not "done *their* utmost." "Five Lords meet," declared one outspoken critic,¹ "if they cannot agree, 'Oh, we will meet on Saturday.' 'Oh, but,' says one of them, 'I am to go out of town.'" Newcastle's own incompetence stood abundantly revealed. "Defend the place?" he would cry with fussy ardour. "Of course we will—but tell me, pray, where may it be?" He was hurrying England along the sure path to ruin. It was like a child, said the same outspoken critic, driving a go-cart along a precipice edge. But at length even Newcastle's own eyes were opened, and before it was too late he had handed over the reins to one in whose keeping they were safe, to one who could drive with all the fury of a Jehu, yet remain complete master of the car.

William Pitt.—William Pitt, better known by the title he took later as the Earl of Chatham, was a man of forty-eight when the crisis of 1756 summoned him to power. He had begun life as a soldier, taking his commission in the Dragoon Guards, or "Blues," as they were called. His taste, however, ran towards politics, and, obtaining from a rich relative his nomination to the rotten borough of Old Sarum, he had entered the House of Commons in 1735. Though a Whig, he was from the first a bitter enemy of Walpole, and had made something of a splash in Parliament by his vehement attacks upon the tottering giant. After Walpole's fall he had taken minor office under the Pelham administration, being appointed Paymaster of the Forces, but not gaining thereby admission to the councils of the inner Cabinet. Yet he was a marked man by this time and in more ways than one. Many disliked and feared him as a dangerous upstart. The King could not abide him; and his restless genius disturbed the comfortable slumbers of the elder Whigs. For, though he had adapted his policy to suit the Pelhams and abandoned the violent attitude of early youth, he refused to sell his soul to any man. In an age when bribery was almost universal, Pitt kept his hands entirely clean. Obligations, whether for patronage or money,

¹ William Pitt himself.

were sure in the long run to hamper his career; and, since he meant to rise and knew that he must rise, he preferred to rely upon his natural gifts alone. Of these there never could have been the smallest doubt.

He was a born debater, going to the centre of the matter with unerring instinct. His rhetoric was superb. Humorous, tragic, and satirical by turns, he could set the House rocking with convulsive laughter, cow it into abject and terror-struck submission, wither all opponents with his lofty scorn. No actor ever knew better how to play upon the feelings of an audience, and Pitt used his voice and gesture with an incomparable skill which would have made a fortune on the stage. At times, it must be allowed, he was apt to be too theatrical. From early youth he had been a constant martyr to the gout; yet even this infirmity was turned to use. He would come down to the House his feet swathed in bandages, a crutch supporting him, his arm suspended in a sling. Thus arrayed he would harrow his hearers with the pathetic appeal of a sick and dying man. Yet, as he warmed to his work and the flood of his own eloquence began to carry him away, out would come the crippled arm from its sling, the bandaged foot would stamp in passion on the floor, and the crutch, no longer needed, would be whirled above his head. Pitt was a man of many faults and many affectations. But at least he knew his strength, knew also England's need of it, and, so long as an ounce of vigour remained in his frail body, spent it most gladly in the nation's cause. And now at the crisis of 1756, when all around him were helplessly wringing their hands over England's failure at Minorea, he saw that his chance had come. "I am sure," he said, "that I can save this country, and that nobody else can." In November, 1756, Pitt became at last "First Minister of State."

Pitt's War Policy.—The course of Pitt's first ministry, during which he served under the nominal leadership of the Duke of Devonshire, was anything but smooth. The King, as we have said, disliked him, and within six months he and the Duke were forced to give up office. But the eclipse did not last long. The country could not get on without Pitt's genius, and a few weeks later he came back as joint head of a Coalition Government. Newcastle, his old chief, was First Lord of the Treasury; Fox, his chief rival, was Paymaster of the Forces. But it was a coalition only in name. Pitt ruled as a dictator. It was just as well. Nothing but decisive action conceived and directed by a single master brain could have restored England's shaken fortunes. Picture the situation. On the continent Frederic of Prussia was England's sole ally, and the Powers were now banded together to destroy him. France, which had not forgotten the humiliation she had suffered in the Marlborough wars, was thirsting for revenge. She saw herself already mistress over Europe. She counted upon making India and North America her own. Perhaps she even hoped to wrest from England her hold over the seas. Pitt, however, grasped the situation, saw its vast dangers, gauged its possibilities. His powerful intellect thought (as somebody has said) in continents, and, while keeping a close grip on every detail of the

operations, he laid his plans broadly and on a gigantic scale. A mere passive defence—to checkmate French aggression and no more—did not suit him. He was for carrying war into the enemy's camp, for conquering Canada as well as holding England's own colonies, for ousting the French from India as well as for recovering Calcutta.

In a word, he was the first British minister to grasp clearly the bold idea of an Empire overseas. His ambition was not merely to stop France from becoming mistress of the world, but to make Britain so. Yet he did not empty or dissipate his energy on wild colonial schemes. He saw that Europe remained the central theatre of action, and that only by defeating France at home could he conquer her permanently abroad. "We shall win Canada," he said, "on the banks of the Elbe." Not that he had any natural weakness or affection for Hanover or Prussia. In the old days of Carteret he had been a bitter opponent of such foreign entanglements. But now the situation was entirely changed; and not even Carteret himself could have been stronger on the necessity of supporting England's foreign friends. Pitt saw that before the combined attack of France and Austria Frederic must inevitably succumb without strong British aid. So aid went out to Frederic—troops so far as England could spare them, money which she could spare with infinitely greater ease. Nor must it ever be forgotten that victory is forged by silver bullets, and that it was the staying power of the long English purse which enabled her to fight through this series of great wars to ultimate success. Taxes paid by England's rich landowners and merchants continued to finance her ally's armies as well as to support her own, when France and Austria were drained to the last penny and forced to capitulate from sheer exhaustion. But Pitt, above all, perceived the capital importance of British sea power. He used it to keep France preoccupied and nervous by threatening attacks upon her coast. He used it to convoy troops to England's colonials, while France was almost powerless to help hers; and, though the French fleet fought doggedly and well, he never once gave it the opportunity to cancel this great advantage. The Navy in his keeping remained the sure basis of English victory.

The Seven Years' War (so called because it lasted from 1756 to 1763) was waged in three separate—widely separate—areas, in North America, in India, and in Europe itself. Each of these three it will be advisable to treat apart. In each it should be noted that fortune had gone against England previous to Pitt's entry upon power, that under his influence and direction the aspect of the war was almost immediately changed, and that by the time his work had been accomplished England had gained decisively the upper hand in all the three. We will begin with North America.

II. THE WAR IN NORTH AMERICA

Before we can understand the campaigns by which Canada was now to be brought under the British flag, it will first be necessary to cast

our eyes back over the situation and events of the preceding years. Tension between the French and English settlers had for some while been growing greater, and, although the French colonial population was vastly inferior in numbers—counting perhaps 60,000 souls against two million British—yet they had at least made up for this initial disadvantage by their more aggressive and far-sighted tactics. While they were busy training every man that they could muster and stiffening their colonial levies by regiments and officers sent out from France, their Anglo-Saxon rivals were giving no serious trouble or attention to measures of defence. The Southern planters of Maryland or Virginia refused to raise a finger on behalf of the remote northern frontier. The Quakers of Pennsylvania made it a point of conscience to abstain from warfare altogether. Even the Puritan settlers of the northern group, though themselves directly menaced by a near and watchful enemy, were ill-organised and disunited. An undisciplined militia, whose very officers were elected by the common rank and file, was all that they could put into the field against the trained regiments of France; and the wonder is not that Canada was eventually conquered, but that England's possessions had not long before been lost.

Braddock's March.—The territory now held by her colonials formed, as has been said above, a long narrow strip of sea-board bounded on the west by the Alleghany Mountains and extending from Georgia in the south to Acadia or Nova Scotia¹ in the extreme north. This narrow strip was well-nigh encircled and contained by a vast and growing girdle of French territory, which began from Cape Breton Island off the coast of Nova Scotia, followed south-west along the shores of the St. Lawrence, and then plunged south through the as yet uncolonised basin of the Ohio down to the main stream and outlet of the Mississippi. During the War of the Austrian Succession one horn of the semi-circle—Cape Breton Island—had fallen for the moment into British hands, and its fortress of Louisburg, which commanded the approach to the St. Lawrence River, had been captured. The French, however, had bargained eagerly for its recovery; and to the intense annoyance of its British captors Louisburg had been surrendered in exchange for Madras at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Having thus secured their position on its northern flank, the French began to complete the work of encirclement towards the south. A line of forts or block-houses (to which reference has already been made above) was projected all along the western rear of the British colonies. Several were built, and in 1754 one such fort was established on the upper reaches of the Ohio and named after its founder Fort Duquesne. Fort Duquesne was practically due west of Philadelphia, and, when the English saw the enemy's embrace thus closing round them, they suddenly became alive to the gravity of their position. Even the Newcastle Cabinet woke up, rubbed its eyes, and sent out two regiments under an elderly, brave, but incompetent officer named Braddock.

¹ Nova Scotia became England's by the Treaty of Utrecht.

As soon as he arrived, a council of war was held; and, though in Europe at least England and France were outwardly at peace, it was decided that Braddock and his regulars, together with a small colonial reinforcement, should march into the interior, cross the Alleghanies, and capture Fort Duquesne. On 7th June, 1755, the memorable trek began. It was scorching summer. Roads were non-existent. Two considerable ranges had to be surmounted. The forest scrub was dense and swarmed with hostile Indians. Under such conditions five or six miles a day was as much as a column, heavily encumbered with wagons, ammunition carts, and siege artillery, was able to accomplish. Nevertheless, by the 7th of July Braddock had arrived in the neighbourhood of Fort Duquesne. With rising spirits the British regulars pushed on through the bush, moving like an army on parade, in close formation, with a drum and fife band playing at their head, their smart red uniforms, short pig-tails, and pipe-clayed trappings presenting a novel and incongruous spectacle in those virgin forest glades. As they advanced, the undergrowth grew denser. Their pace slowed down. Suddenly all ears were startled by the wild war-whoop of Red Indian warriors. For a moment the blue uniforms of French regulars were seen flitting about among the natives they had armed and trained. Then volley after volley, aimed by an invisible foe, played on the close ranks of the British column. The red-coats stood the ordeal manfully, but their officers were a special target for the enemy's sharp-shooters; no attempt was made to extend the men in open order; and after two hours of simple butchery the column broke into a wild stampede. Braddock, mortally wounded, was carried back on a litter; and before he was able to rally the survivors, he had died. Barely half the members of that tragic expedition got home to tell the tale. Among them was a young officer, whose intrepid conduct on that fatal day proved but an earnest of still more brilliant exploits yet to come—George Washington.

Pitt's Influence.—Braddock's disaster sent a thrill of shame and horror through the colonies and England. Fresh troops and volunteers were raised among the settlers. Fresh raids were undertaken against the French blockhouse system. But next to nothing was achieved. There was no directing brain. So the months passed. In '56 came the formal declaration of war between the parent countries. But Newcastle was still at the helm and still nothing was done. Then enter Pitt—and, although at so great a distance much precious time was necessarily wasted before his influence was duly felt, England's colonial policy was from that moment onwards utterly transformed. Pitt's habit, as has been said previously, was to think in continents. He saw that to retain England's footing in America she must conquer Canada first; and to conquer Canada became his firm intent. Two regiments of Highlanders were at once enrolled. Eight thousand regulars were voted for service overseas; and by midsummer of '57 the best part of this contingent had arrived in Halifax. Nor did Pitt omit from his con-

sideration the improvement (sorely needed) of the high command. The army, like every other part of governmental service, had suffered from the prevalent corruption. Promotion was obtained by influence or wire-pulling rather than by honest merit or hard work. Pitt, who had his finger upon every detail, was determined to bring true genius to the fore. He over-rode all rules of seniority; and, with a marvellous eye for detecting youthful promise, he chose out officers whom he could trust—we shall hear presently of more than one. By the ardour of his enthusiasm he breathed a new spirit into England's campaigns. His influence was magnetic. He made others believe both in him and in themselves; and, though at times his interference must have hampered and deranged the smooth conduct of operations, it was impossible, men

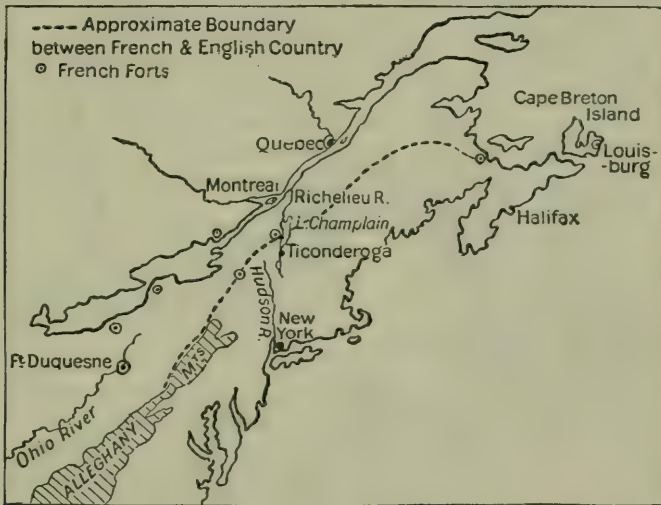


FIG. 34.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE CAMPAIGNS FROM 1755-1759.

said, to leave Pitt's presence without feeling oneself thenceforth a braver man.

Ticonderoga.—The year 1757 passed uneventfully. Summer was far advanced when the reinforcements came, and winter in these northern latitudes was no campaigning season. In '58, however, the invasion of Canada was begun in sober earnest. To reach it two main routes were then available. One route ran overland up the valley of the Hudson River, past Lake Champlain, and over the River Richelieu, till it debouched in the St. Lawrence between Quebec and Montreal. The other route was by sea, past Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island and across the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the river mouth. In the campaign of '58 an approach was made by each of these two routes. One expedition struck overland along the Hudson valley to capture a French fort which blocked the route near a spot called Ticonderoga. Abercromby, its commander, was a feeble general; and, though Pitt had sent

Lord Howe, a smart young officer, along with him, Lord Howe was unhappily killed upon the march. Thus left without an adviser, Abercromby proceeded like a fool. As he approached the fort he left his artillery behind him; and, instead of being content to reduce the place by siege (which he could easily have done), he endeavoured to carry it by storm. The result was a foregone conclusion. The British regiments were mown down wholesale at every hopeless charge; and by evening the order was given to retire. This was a sad set-back; but happily it was the last. And meanwhile the other expedition had compensated for it by a great success. Sir Jeffrey Amherst, who was one of "Pitt's young men," and James Wolfe, who was another, had undertaken to reduce the fortress of Louisburg, the old bone of contention in the previous war and now considerably strengthened. Avoiding Abercromby's error at Ticonderoga, they sat down with patience to a five weeks' siege, battered the place to bits with siege

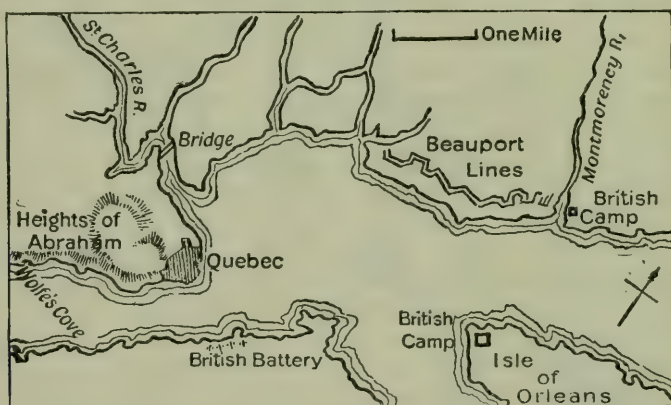


FIG. 35.—PLAN TO ILLUSTRATE WOLFE'S ATTACK ON QUEBEC.

artillery, and finally without much serious fighting compelled it to surrender. Their way lay open now to the St. Lawrence and Quebec. But the news of Abercromby's failure kept them back, and the invasion of Canada was postponed till '59.

Wolfe at Quebec.—Quebec, which was to be the objective of the next year's expedition, is by nature far less accessible than Louisburg. It lies on the tip of a projecting spur on the northern shore of the great estuary, which here varies from one to over three miles wide. The town is well protected from approach along the bank and to the west by the Heights of Abraham beetling above the river, to the east by the side-stream known as the St. Charles. Beyond the St. Charles stretched the long Beauport ridge shelving gently to the shore. This vulnerable point the French had entrenched deeply, and here the main body of their troops were now encamped. Montcalm, their general, who had arrived in '56, was a capable commander. He had made his dispositions with the utmost skill, and some recent reinforcements which

got past the British fleet under cover of a fog had raised the total of his command—militia-men included—to some 16,000 men. Quebec was beyond doubt a difficult nut to crack; and only a man of extraordinary daring and imagination could ever have had the spirit even to attempt it. Pitt, however, had set his heart on the attempt and had chosen his man. During the previous winter he had seen the young James Wolfe, then home in London, and offered him the job.

Wolfe was a born soldier. As a high-spirited lad of sixteen he had fought among the infantry at Dettingen; and even in an age so adverse to true merit nothing could stop his rise. Though he was weak in health, his reckless enthusiasm allowed him no rest to his frail body. A skilful fisherman, a first-class shot, and an indefatigable dancer, Wolfe yet found time for study and wide reading. He knew the campaigns of all the Greek and Roman generals, and (what is more) he could turn such knowledge to account. Struck by the need for open order fighting, he had trained a body of light infantry on lines suggested by a hint in Xenophon; and his wilful disregard for the hide-bound traditions of the British Army shocked and bewildered his superior officers. Though they called him a madman for his pains, the shock was sorely needed. "Mad, is he?" the King himself is reported to have said. "Then I hope he'll bite some of my generals." To such a man, as well may be imagined, Pitt's proposal appeared a heaven-sent chance; and at the beginning of next June Wolfe was setting out from Louisburg with an army half the size of Montcalm's to attack Quebec. At the same time another expedition under Amherst, his old comrade, was taking the overland route to Canada viâ Lake Champlain, intending to aim a simultaneous blow at Montreal. The co-operation of these two separate armies was destined, however, to miscarry. Amherst was held up all summer by the French block-house system; and Wolfe was left to tackle Canada alone.

Towards the end of June, Wolfe's fleet of men-of-war and transports arrived at their destination. The first step was to occupy a base; and for this purpose the Island of Orleans, which lies in mid-river some five miles below the city, was at once selected. An attempt on the enemy's part to dislodge the fleet by fire ships was happily frustrated; and the British tars were equal to the occasion, putting out pluckily in boats to tow the burning hulks ashore and shouting—so the story goes—in boisterous merriment, "Damme, Jack, didst ever take Hell in tow before?" His base on the Island of Orleans being thus secured, Wolfe lost no time in occupying two further strategic points, one on either bank of the river. On the south bank and directly opposite the city he posted his siege artillery; and very soon the fire of the British guns had reduced the houses of Quebec to ruins. A second gun position had also been taken up on the northern bank, just east of the Beauport lines and divided from them by a torrent and a wooded gorge. From this point of vantage a bombardment of the French lines was steadily maintained. So July passed. Quebec itself was shattered. A skir-

mish or two had taken place across the wooded gorge. But Montcalm remained immovable. It paid him well to play a waiting game. Two months more and winter would be at hand—and then good-bye to Monsieur Wolfe and all his aspirations.

How short his time was Wolfe, too, knew well enough, and he resolved upon an infinitely daring stroke—an assault on the Beauport lines. Flat-bottomed boats were made ready. These were to run ashore with troops hard by the wooded gorge, and simultaneously another party was to cross the torrent which flowed down it. Daring as the plan was, its first stages went off smoothly. The boats ran in; the soldiers disembarked; and a part of the Beauport lines was already breached, when a strange and unaccountable mishap marred all. Stung by some sudden frenzy, the soldiers rushed ahead, without orders, without officers, without tactical formation, and delivered a wild charge. The slope was without cover. It was swept with a hail of bullets. And the best that Wolfe could do when all was over was to get his men off again as rapidly as they had come.

The Heights of Abraham.—Another period of inaction followed. Eating out his heart at this bitter disappointment and stricken down by an attack of devastating fever, Wolfe watched the precious days of August slipping by. At the beginning of September he rose, still weak from sickness, to plan the last attack, which cost him his life and took Quebec. Having failed to gain a footing on the Beauport flank, he resolved to attempt the city from the westward and to scale the precipitous Heights of Abraham. To this end he now embarked over half his remaining forces in his ships and sent them upstream several miles above Quebec, where they were kept plying up and down for four days and nights together. Although a small French force was at once sent to watch their movements, it hardly so much as entered Montcalm's head that the British would attempt a landing on the cliff. There was but one path accessible to a scaling party; and this, so Montcalm thought, was adequately held by a French picket. No, if the attack came anywhere, it would come on the St. Charles River and the Beauport Ridge. This illusion kept Montcalm's main army at its previous station; and to this illusion Wolfe lent all the colour that he could. The British guns which faced Quebec began a fresh bombardment eclipsing all that they had done before. Everything was arranged to give Montcalm the impression that the excursion up the river was an idle feint and that the attack was being planned against his main defences.

Meanwhile the British ships plied on the river with their precious freight and Wolfe waited for the arrival of a favourable night. On the 12th September it came. The order was given. The troops on board the ships dropped silently into their boats and floated downstream to the cliff-side. The night was dark; the river was broad. They passed almost unnoticed—but not quite. Once a challenge rang out from the shore. A Scottish officer replied in perfect French; and

the sentry, knowing that French provision-boats made midnight journeys, accepted the explanation. They came to the path, slipped quietly from their boats, swarmed up the steep ascent, and, appearing suddenly out of the darkness in the midst of the French picket, drove them headlong from their post. Meanwhile, as fast as other boats arrived, their men passed up on to the summit, and when morning broke Wolfe had a force over 4000 strong marshalled on the heights above the town. The news fell like a thunderclap on Montcalm, who was still expecting an attempt against the Beauport lines. He acted promptly, gathering a force almost equal to the British, hurrying them over the St. Charles and marching them desperately against the ridge. There Wolfe awaited them. His men had orders to load with double bullets and to withhold their fire till the enemy were close. The volley, which was delivered at less than fifty paces, tore the French lines to ribands. After a second discharge the British went home with the bayonet and the day was won. In the moment of victory, however, Wolfe himself was hit through the lung, and sank a dying man. As he was carried towards the rear, they told him the enemy was running. "God be praised," he said, "I now die in peace," and fell back in a last swoon. But his task was achieved. Quebec was taken. Amherst, who had been checked that year on Lake Champlain, came through next summer and took Montreal. Canada thenceforward became England's. The French inhabitants were generously treated and soon settled down as loyal and contented subjects of the British crown. Their descendants, who are still numerous, remain so to this day.

III. THE WAR IN INDIA

With India, as with North America, we must begin the story by casting back over the eight years interval which divided the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle from the outbreak of the Seven Years' War. In India the peace had itself done something to restore England's fortunes. Madras, which she had lost to the French, was given back to her. The Company resumed the broken threads of its prosperous enterprise. The natives brought in their wares, ships plied their homeward way, trade thrived, and there was little hint of that tremendous destiny which was soon to deliver over this swarming country of brown peoples into the keeping of a handful of whites. The conquest of Hindustan was not, like that of Canada, planned by a master mind or even dreamt of. It was no long campaigns of march and counter-march, no scientific generalship, nor brilliant scheme of far-flung strategy which served to make India England's, but simply the cool courage of a single British officer and the steady discipline of a few score British soldiers, which were to sweep the hordes of an Oriental despot like chaff before the wind. Nevertheless there was another and more insidious enemy for England to fear than the hollow impotence of the decaying Mogul Viceroys. India herself possessed no strength or power of resistance;

but already the cunning brain of a French diplomatist was planning to turn her very weakness to the account of his country's cause. Since his arrival as Governor of Pondicherry in 1741, Dupleix had slowly been extending his subtle influence over the south of India. He had wormed himself into the confidence of various native princes, and, in particular, he had established a strong hold over the ruler of the Deccan who reigned in Hyderabad. In 1748, the year of the Aix Treaty, this potentate had died. Disputes had arisen concerning his successor, and there followed, as was usual, civil war. The subordinate district of the Carnatic Coast (where lay Pondicherry and Madras) was also soon involved. Two candidates had claimed its throne, and Dupleix, in pursuance of his accustomed policy, had supported one of these. The English, not to be outdone, had backed the other. Unhappily for her, however, she had put her money on the losing horse. The British nominee was overwhelmed and slain, and his son, Mahomed Ali, was hunted into Trichinopoly and there besieged. His case very soon grew desperate, and nothing seemed more certain than that Trichinopoly would fall, that Dupleix' nominee would duly be enthroned, and that the whole position of the English company on the Carnatic coast would thus be set at the mercy of a hostile prince. Then a miracle happened.

Clive at Arcot.—The miracle was the work of a young Company's clerk, named Robert Clive. Shipped out by his relatives to India as a good-for-nothing boy, Clive had passed a miserable apprenticeship at the uncongenial desk. Twice he had attempted suicide, but the pistol refused on each occasion to go off. He had challenged a notorious bully to a duel for cheating over cards; but the boy's cool pluck had won his opponent's admiration, and once again he had survived. Clive was now, in 1751, just twenty-five years old, and, as good luck would have it, he had been recently appointed a captain in the Company's small troop. When it seemed as though nothing could save Trichinopoly or avert the failure of the native prince whom the Company had backed, Clive suddenly came forward with a bold proposal which was accepted by his chiefs. With half-a-dozen other officers, two hundred English and three hundred Sepoy soldiers, Clive undertook to march, not against the besiegers of Trichinopoly itself, but against the town of Arcot, the seat and capital of the Carnatic throne. He entered it unopposed, and the impudent diversion produced the precise effect he had intended. The French and their allies were thoroughly alarmed. Troops were detached from the siege of Trichinopoly and sent back helter-skelter to recover Arcot. There were soon ten thousand native troops buzzing around the walls, within which sat Clive with a garrison now diminished to 320 men. The story of that famous siege is too long to be told here. Fifty days of painful vigilance and slow starvation had reduced the tiny garrison to the borders of despair, when suddenly a new hope dawned. A band of Mahratta warriors—that terrible hill-race which was now the scourge of India—was rumoured to be marching to their aid; good news indeed, but its effect was double-edged, for it quickened

the pace of the besiegers, and a final assault on a grand scale was planned forthwith. Rafts were made ready to cross the waters of the moat; elephants, armed with steel plates upon their foreheads, were sent as "living battering-rams" against the gates; and for a whole hour hordes of innumerable natives, doped with drugs and inspired with the courage of fanatics, swarmed up against the wall. It was a fierce ordeal; but the English garrison held grimly on. Their fire never faltered. The ardour of the natives quickly cooled. The attack



FIG. 36.—INDIA DURING THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

died down almost as suddenly as it had begun, and when the next morning broke the enemy had vanished. Clive was the hero of the hour, and he made good use of his success. French forts were taken. Many of Dupleix' Sepoys deserted to England's side. Before long Trichinopoly itself had been relieved, and Mahomed Ali, the English nominee, reigned in the Carnatic.

Surajah Dowlah.—Clive himself came home for a while to England in enfeebled health; but on his return to India he was appointed Governor of Fort St. David. The scene of his second exploit, however—

lay no longer in the neighbourhood of Madras, but by the shores of the River Ganges and in the province of Bengal. There on the Hoogly river the English Company possessed a station known as Fort St. William, hard by the populous native village of Calcutta. The Mogul's Viceroy who ruled over Bengal as an independent prince was a native of a peculiarly brutal type, by name Surajah Dowlah. He hated the English, resented their presence at Calcutta, and regarded with jealous eyes the possibilities of plunder which their station seemed to offer. He awaited only a suitable occasion to attack it. About the same time as men in England were indignantly discussing the failure of Byng's mission to Minorca, Surajah Dowlah perceived the opportunity he sought. The English residents of Fort St. William themselves supplied him with a pretext. In anticipation of war against the French (whose neighbouring settlement at Chandernagore was a constant menace to their station), they had begun to strengthen and improve the defences of their fort. Surajah Dowlah objected, and, when no notice was taken of his protest, he marched down upon the place and took it, making the residents his prisoners. What followed is well known, and it must always rank among the blackest crimes even in Eastern history. The European prisoners, 146 in number, were placed in a narrow cell, twenty feet square, low-roofed, and ventilated only by two tiny holes. Careless of their fate, Surajah Dowlah retired to rest. Before an hour had passed on that hot summer night, the air in the small cell was quite exhausted. The wretched inmates, gasping for breath and maddened with intolerable thirst, trampled each other down in their frantic efforts to gain a station at the windows. The guards outside made merry at their torture, tantalised them by sprinkling drops of water which could only serve to intensify their thirst, and, threats, bribes, or supplications notwithstanding, refused point-blank to disturb the slumbers of their brutal master. In the morning there were three-and-twenty persons left alive; the rest were dead.

Plassey and the Sequel.—When news of this horror reached Madras, a stern cry went up for vengeance, and within forty-eight hours it was decided to send Clive with such troops as were available to punish the author of the crime. By the end of the following December 900 English and nearly twice as many Sepoys were landed in the north to do battle with a prince who could count more subjects, as Macaulay says, than the Queen-Empress or the King of France himself. Clive retook Calcutta without trouble, but before he could advance into the interior he received orders—to his own intense disgust—to treat for terms. Chicanery and fraud are the heart and soul of eastern diplomacy, and Surajah Dowlah's tactics were no exception to this rule. But during the negotiations opportunity arose of paying him back in his own coin. The prince's chief commander, Mir Jaffar by name, expressed a secret readiness to throw his master over. Clive, like most Englishmen of the time, had one code of honour among white men, another among black, and, while he lulled Surajah's mind with all

appearances of friendship, he embraced Mir Jaffar's proposal to bring his army over to the English side. The danger of a hitch induced him to still sharper practice. A certain native go-between discovered what schemes were brewing and threatened ostentatiously to blab. Clive bought his silence by a forged promise of reward which it was never intended to fulfill. Then, when the time was ripe, the small English army moved out of Calcutta and proceeded northward against the foe. At Plassey, somewhat south of the junction between the Ganges and the Hoogly, the native army was encountered over fifty thousand strong. Clive's force was hardly a twentieth of their number, and, when the battle was joined, Mir Jaffar was still hesitating to show his hand. But the English did not flinch. Their well-directed musketry and the fire of their field-pieces checked, held, and eventually turned the onslaught of the natives. Surajah, easily persuaded that the day was lost, gave orders for retreat, and himself fled from the field on a swift camel. Mir Jaffar, seeing the issue of the fight no longer doubtful, now tactfully deserted to the British side. He at least rendered England the service of laying his late master by the heels and consigning him to a fate most richly merited. As a reward for his by no means disinterested treachery, he was installed in Surajah's place as ruler of Bengal, paying henceforth a vassal's homage and an annual tribute to the English Company.

Arcot had won England a preponderating influence in the Carnatic. Plassey had placed a creature of England's on the throne of Bengal. But the Deccan—in which was comprised almost the whole vast peninsula of southern India—remained as yet untouched. There at least French influence still reigned supreme; and the Count de Lally, successor to Dupleix, was already laying plans for England's undoing. Madras was threatened; but Clive, instead of returning from Bengal to meet this danger, decided against orders on a flank attack. A small contingent was sent southward from Calcutta and worked along the coast to Masulipatam, where a French garrison was stationed. It was a telling stroke. The capture of Masulipatam sounded the death-knell to all the French ambitions. Their prestige was shattered. The ruler of the Deccan hastened to throw them over, and became thenceforth the English Company's ally. But Clive's health was once again precarious, and he was forced to sail for England. To complete the work which he had so well begun and to drive the French completely out of India remained for another hand than his. It was in the latter end of 1759 that Sir Eyre Coote, now the Company's commander, attacked and captured the French fort at Wandewash, south of Madras. Count Lally, while attempting to retrieve it, was signally defeated; and Pondicherry itself was soon under close siege. With its fall the French power passed away for ever; events in Europe forbade a renewal of the struggle, and henceforth India lay before England, an undisputed field.

In all these doings Pitt played, it must be confessed, no active part.

By the time that Plassey was fought, he himself was barely seated firmly in position. The most that he could do was to sing Clive's praises in the House of Commons and reward "that heaven-born general" at his home-coming with signal marks of admiration and esteem. Reinforcements he could indeed send out and did send; and very useful they were in the final bout with the French. But India was too far distant for a minister in London to keep the direction of the campaign's details under his personal eye. England's Indian victories were won under the rising star of Pitt's good fortune; they were in no sense his work. At most they did but add to the increasing lustre which triumph after triumph won in Europe was now shedding on his name.

IV. THE WAR IN EUROPE

Frederic's Campaigns.—Magnificent as were the campaigns in North America and India, rich in stirring incident and far-reaching in result, they were none the less little more than supplementary "side-shows" to the main centre of the conflict nearer home. Whether France or England was eventually to emerge as permanent mistress of the world, was decided not in American back-woods nor on sun-scorched tropical sands, but on the less romantic plains of Northern Germany and in the familiar waters of the Channel. Whatever were the deeper issues of the war, England had entered it ostensibly to save Prussia from destruction, and throughout its course the paramount object of England's policy was the preservation of this her one and indispensable ally. Frederic's plight, indeed, demanded all the help that England could give. He was encompassed about by a ring of hostile nations—France, Austria, Sweden, Saxony, and Russia—to all appearance an overwhelming combination. It was scarcely to be expected that Prussia, a young power still in her infancy, could meet such odds as these. Her territory—a straggling spread-eagle of divergent provinces, reaching out a narrow eastern wing along the Baltic and possessing in its recent acquisition of Silesia a handsome but extremely vulnerable tail—was as ill adapted for defence as it could be and exposed to attack from half-a-dozen sides at the very least. Yet, in the face of these enormous disadvantages, Frederic put up a splendid fight. His army of seasoned veterans had lost none of the fine discipline and spirit of their Silesian conquest; and they were led with a genius which no one can deny.

Frederic was a portent among generals. On Napoleon's own showing he stands well in the front rank. More than one of his victories was a positive masterpiece of strategy; in defeat he could rally a demoralised and scattered army; and despite the most cruel vicissitudes and disappointments he never would cry lost. The perfect readiness and matchless organisation of his army gave him a brilliant start. In '56 he overran the whole of Saxony. In '57 he entered Bohemia and

nearly captured Prague. But this success had been bought at too high a price. He began to run short of men. Towards the autumn of that year the tide had turned against him. Berlin itself was plundered, Silesia lost. But Frederic was not to be beaten. By a gigantic effort he recovered his feet, beat the French at Rossbach in November, dashed off to Silesia and beat the Austrians at Leuthen, and thus within thirty days of marching retrieved all that he had lost. His troubles however were not over yet; and in '59 luck deserted him once more. He was threatened on two fronts. An Austrian army was massing in the south. The Cossacks were sweeping the country to the east. Frederic turned against the Russians, and after a frightful struggle saw his army broken into utter rout at a place called Kunersdorf. His own capture was but narrowly averted; and for the moment Frederic was given over to despair. He ordered the royal family to evacuate Berlin, and in a farewell message declared that he himself would not survive the ruin of his realm. But he still struggled on. His recovery was slow; it was chequered by numerous reverses; and in no small degree he owed it to the staunch support of his allies. Without the assistance afforded him by England recovery would never have been possible at all; and to the English share in the struggle we must now turn.

English Campaigns in Hanover.—As in the great European conflict of more recent days, England's rôle in the Seven Years' War was equally twofold. She had first and foremost to maintain the mastery of the sea; and on land she had to protect her ally's flank. This second part of her task was rendered the more simple, because, as the map will show, the whole western frontier of Prussia is covered by Hanover. The Anglo-Hanoverian army of King George served therefore a double purpose. While defending Hanover for George himself, it was able also to act sentinel on Frederic's flank, ridding him of all responsibilities and dangers toward the west. In short, the maintenance of Hanover was the indispensable foundation of the alliance's success; and the more shame to England therefore that it was grievously mishandled at the start. The fault lay with the Duke of Cumberland, who went out to Hanover in '57 to take up the command. A bully, a martinet, and incompetent at that, Cumberland loathed Pitt with all his heart and laboured to discredit him with George; and so much weight did his poisonous influence carry in the royal counsels that the great minister was, as we have seen, for a time at least dismissed. The eclipse did not last long; but, before Pitt had barely time to resume the reins of office, Cumberland had committed a disgraceful act which placed England's whole cause in jeopardy. Defeated by the French at Hastenbeck, and driven back northward on the German coast, the Duke had taken on himself to sign an agreement which would in effect have put Hanover out of the war. One half of the Hanoverian army was to be interned; the other half was pledged to observe a strict neutrality. The French accepted

the surrender and withdrew their forces. In England, however, the outcry was tremendous. The King declared (with Pitt's most vehement support) that in signing the agreement of Klosterseven Cumberland had gone beyond his powers; and with less honour than discretion England repudiated the shameful terms outright. The campaign was now resumed; and Cumberland's place was taken by Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, lent to Hanover from Frederic's Prussian staff. Happily he proved as brilliant a commander as Cumberland was bad, and the complexion of affairs was very soon improved. Nor was Pitt slow in getting into his stride. Money poured out to Hanover and Prussia. "We must have heaps of millions," Pitt declared; and more than two and a half millions—in those days an immense sum—went out to Frederic alone in the next four years. Two thousand English troops



FIG. 37.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE CONTINENTAL CAMPAIGNS OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

were promised for service with the Hanoverian army; and Pitt was so far better than his word that he sent a full six thousand, at the same time undertaking to defray the cost of the German troops as well. Men of the old school complained of his extravagance. Extravagant perhaps it was; but it was an extravagance that paid. Ferdinand of Brunswick was already performing marvels with the very troops which Cumberland had so woefully mishandled. In '58 he had actually driven the French back west across the Rhine, when the promised English reinforcements reached him. Though presently compelled to retire on the Hanoverian frontier, he maintained a stout defence, an invaluable support to Frederic's flank. In August of '59 he went one better. Having manœuvred the enemy into accepting battle on unfavourable terms, he trounced them handsomely at Minden. The French suffered total rout; and were only saved from complete annihilation by

the stupidity (or cowardice) of the English cavalry commander. In blank disobedience of instructions Lord George Sackville refused to launch his troops upon the broken foe. There was not the smallest excuse for his behaviour. The opportunity was lost, and the French escaped. Yet, coming as it did within a few weeks of Frederic's disastrous rout at Kunersdorf, Minden was doubly welcome. It afforded a gleam of hope at a black hour when England's ally's plight had otherwise seemed hopeless. It was the turning-point of the war.

England's Success at Sea.—Nor was Minden an isolated triumph; for in that same year England won another great success. She had not all this while been neglecting her natural element, the water; and, if her participation in the land campaigns had been comparatively small, she had borne the whole heavy burden of sea warfare alone. Pitt's use of the navy was on a lordly scale. Fleets were sent out regardless of expense; every craft afloat was pressed into the service; every dock-yard was kept building to its full capacity. Even so England's commitments were so vast and so extensive that ships were kept riding the channel till their very timbers rotted and their hulks were foul. A constant watch was kept on the French naval bases, and scarcely a ship was allowed to get away to Canada or India. Yet Pitt was not to be contented with a mere blockade. He saw that one use of sea-power was to assist England's land forces by an offensive strategy. So a succession of daring raids were made on the French coast—on Rochefort in '57; on St. Malo, Cherbourg, and Le Havre in '58. There was little positive result to show for them beyond much damage done to the French shipping; but undoubtedly they served a useful purpose. They kept the enemy on tenterhooks, and detained in France no small portion of the forces which might otherwise have been employed against Hanover or Prussia. The strain, moreover, was slowly telling on the Frenchmen's nerves. Their funds were approaching exhaustion; colonies were slipping from their grasp in distant quarters of the globe; and the sense of baffled effort, increased by the calm and successful tenacity of England, stung them at length to a despairing resolution. They saw (as many others have seen since) that only by a successful invasion of England's shores could complete and permanent victory be won. Their plans were accordingly directed to this end.

At their great naval base of Rochefort in the Bay of Biscay, as well as at Dunkirk and at Le Havre, there were concentrations of soldiers, transport ships, and flat-bottomed boats. Two main fleets were in readiness, one lying at Brest under Cape Finistère, the other at Toulon, their Mediterranean station; and in August of '59 an attempt was made to effect a junction of the two. The Toulon fleet left port, made through Gibraltar Straits and raced for Brest. But after it came Boscawen, the English admiral told off to watch Toulon. He caught them off Lagos Bay, near Cape St. Vincent, and, risking offence to Portuguese neutrality, closed in and broke them up. The Brest fleet

alone remained; but its admiral, Conflans, was no coward, and he still clung to the project of invasion. His main difficulty was to escape the tireless watch of the British frigates, behind which in constant readiness lay the Plymouth squadron of Lord Hawke. In November, however, a sudden chance occurred. A westerly gale blew Hawke's ships back to harbour, and before they were able to regain their stations Conflans had slipped away southward out of Brest. There was at once a hot pursuit; and when Hawke came up with him off Quiberon Bay, not far from the Loire mouth, the French commander ran in under the shore, where he scarcely dreamt that the pursuit would follow. The rock-bound coast was full of jutting reefs and sunken shoals—to all appearances a death-trap to any fleet which did not know the soundings. It was a tremendous risk; but Lord Hawke took it, and ran straight in amid the plunging breakers. Two of his vessels struck bottom; but the rest by a miracle got through, and it was all up with Conflans then. Five of the enemy were sunk or captured; seven were driven ashore; the rest went scattering in all directions. Quiberon was a hammer-stroke. To all intents and purposes, France no longer had a fleet; all risk of invasion was over. England was henceforth the unchallenged mistress of the sea; and the shame of Minorea had been at length wiped out. Hawke at any rate had not "failed to do his utmost."

So closed the great year of '59 amid the echoes of repeated victory. Triumph had followed triumph in bewildering succession. Plassey was now great history; but it was known that in the spring Masulipatam had been taken, and the French power in India was tottering to its fall. In early August came the news of Minden. Reports of Lagos Bay had followed hard. Even as Hawke's fleet raced out of the Channel after Conflans, ships were entering it which had assisted at the capture of Quebec. And now the fickle London mob, who had burned Lord Hawke in effigy for letting the French navy out of Brest, were lighting bonfires in his honour for destroying it. It was thus barely three years since Pitt had set out to "organise" world victory from Westminster. He had organised to some purpose.

V

Accession of George III.—The first half of the year '60 brought no great change in the European situation. Thanks to Minden and still further English aid, Frederic's plight, though disastrous, was not desperate. He was presently to be able to reconcile the Russians and so reduce the number of his foes; and, meanwhile, he was prepared to hang on grimly. Given time, it was certain that sooner or later the enemy must crack. France knew that she was beaten. She had lost Canada; she had lost India; she had lost the sea; and England had only to wait until she was ready to acknowledge her defeat. So matters stood on 24th October in the autumn of that year. On 25th October

George II died suddenly at Kensington from a rupture of the heart; and from that moment all was changed. The man who had ruled England for three-and-thirty years without very much affecting her for good or ill was now succeeded by a grandson,¹ who, for worse rather than for better, intended to affect her very much indeed.

Unlike the two first Hanoverian kings, George III was born and bred an Englishman; and in many ways his character was peculiarly English. He was essentially a gentleman, always took off his hat to acknowledge a loyal greeting, and always thanked the band for playing at his court. A strict Protestant, he firmly insisted on holding family prayers, and brought up his children on such narrow Puritanical lines that most of them rebelled against the discipline and went sadly to the dogs. His tastes were strongly for an out-door life. He loved farming and kept pigs; he took a long ride every day in Windsor Park; and, though he could be most punctilious upon state occasions, his private life was studiously simple. He got up at six in the morning, dined for choice on roast mutton and milk pudding, and kept no carpet on his bedroom floor. All this in its way was admirable enough; it was a pleasing novelty to have a king who declared he "gloried in the name of Briton." The trouble only began when it was found that he expected other Britons equally to glory in him. "George, be *king*," was the motto which a devoted mother had for ever dinned into his ears; and George meant to be. Let us not, however, be mistaken. It was no Stuart despotism with which England was now threatened. George III was not fool enough or bold enough for that. His idea was rather to work *through* the constitution than against it, not to make Parliament his enemy, but to nurse it, wheedle it, master it, and use it as his tool. In other words, George attempted what no other monarch has attempted since, to engage in party politics, to form in Parliament a caucus of his followers and manage the country's business as his own chief minister. Of necessity he went warily to work. The Whigs were naturally his most formidable opponents, and they were not to be ousted out of hand. The King, however, was in a strong position. If Whigs could reward their creatures with promotion, so could he. If Whigs could collect adherents by the tactful use of patronage, he had greater opportunities of patronage than they. If Whigs could bribe, George, to his shame, was ready to bribe too. By these now familiar, but no less disgraceful methods, many servile and venal politicians were won over to his side. A party sprang up in Parliament which was known as the "King's Friends"; royal favourites were promoted to posts for which they were notoriously unfitted; and one by one the leading statesmen of the previous reign were shown the door. The first to go—as may easily be guessed—was Pitt; and that is why the European situation was so radically changed.

¹ George III's father, Frederick, Prince of Wales, had died in 1751. Like his son after him, he had shown himself during his lifetime a vigorous opponent of the Whig régime.

Pitt's Policy Reversed.—George III did not love Pitt, and he loved his policy still less. Like the old Tory negotiators of the Treaty of Utrecht, he was by no means anxious to crush France. His one idea was to keep England free from continental complications and play old Walpole's game in his own way. In the opening speech of his reign he plainly asserted his intention to withdraw from "this bloody and expensive war." Pitt had the words altered for publication to "this expensive but just and necessary war;" but the young King's temper was not thereby improved, and he retorted upon Pitt by giving him as fellow Secretary of State a creature of his own, the Earl of Bute.

Lord Bute made no pretence to be a statesman. He had spent an idle life of graceful leisure, dabbling at times in literature and art. He was "a tolerable actor in private theatricals," and, as Prince Frederic one day told him to his face, he would have made an excellent ambassador at some small proud German court "where there was nothing to do." Between such a man and Pitt there could be no lasting unison; and, when the breach came, it was decisive. In the course of the year, Pitt had got information that Spain was intending to join in the war upon the side of France. So far from shrinking from this challenge, Pitt rather welcomed it. Intoxicated by the glory of his recent triumphs, he was prepared to go straight ahead; and taking the bull by the horns he proposed to declare war on Spain, to trap her treasure fleet, and then sweep all her American possessions into the English lap. It was an audacious conception, typical of the man; but he had reckoned without his colleague in the ministry. Under the pernicious influence of Bute, the rest of the Cabinet refused to back him. Three times the sittings of the Council were adjourned; at each renewal of the argument Pitt stuck manfully to his colours; and finally, having failed to convert the Cabinet to his opinion, he resigned. War with the Spanish followed all the same; and they suffered severely for their rash interference. Havana, capital of Cuba, Spain's great West Indian island, was besieged and captured, together with a French island to the east, Martinique. In the Far East meanwhile an expedition sailed from Madras and took Manilla, the great Spanish harbour in the Philippines. For all this no credit could be claimed by Bute, who was now Prime Minister in Pitt's place. He was using his best efforts to undo all Pitt's work, and openly manœuvring for a peace at any price. Within the year he withdrew the annual subsidy which had hitherto gone out to Frederic. He approached both France and Spain with easy terms, and seemed willing to do anything to end the war. It was a strange spectacle, the victorious country entreating the conquered to be allowed to stop; yet that was what Bute's attitude implied. Nevertheless, the Peace which was signed in Paris in 1763 might easily have been worse. England got the whole of Canada and the best part of Louisiana, which left her free to expand westwards at her will. She recovered Minorca, never recaptured since it was lost by Byng seven years before. Over the West Indies and other outlying colonies there was a three-fold deal.

England was to have Tobago and a few other lesser islands, and to receive the adjacent peninsula of Florida from Spain. Spain on her part got back Havana and Manilla. France was to recover Martinique and, provided she kept no garrison therein, her trade stations out in India. As for Frederic of Prussia, he was left out in the cold—a desertion which he never forgave England. But, Russia having swung round to his side, he was able nevertheless to make his peace with Austria on not unsatisfactory terms. He kept Silesia, so long and bloodily disputed. He established Prussia's position as a first-class power, and not long afterwards he added to its territory a considerable slice of Poland. Frederic, in short, had sowed the seeds which Bismarck was to water, and from which grew the recent war of 1914.

Bute's Peace.—The Treaty of Paris was not popular in London. Bute scarcely dared to show his face in London; when he did so, he pulled up his coat collar round his ears and drew his wig down over his eyes. It is said he even kept a trained bodyguard of boxers to protect him against violence. It was too much for the poor man's nerve, and he very soon resigned. Pitt, on the other hand, was still the nation's hero. At the Lord Mayor's Banquet which followed his retirement there was an extraordinary scene. The young King was received in silence, Bute with jeers, but Pitt with a thunder of applause which shook the very timbers of the Guildhall roof. He was given a pension of £3000, and on the eve of his second and less successful ministry in '66 was made a peer under the title of Earl of Chatham.

CHAPTER IX

THE LOSS OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES

I

George and the Whigs.—Like many other monarchs of German origin, George III was the victim of an incurable self-conceit. His narrow mind was altogether centred on his own petty triumphs and personal ambitions; and so blind was he to broader issues that, even when fate placed great opportunities within his grasp, he utterly failed to recognise the fact. Having blundered into a peace which, almost despite himself, committed to his keeping a vast empire in two continents, he followed this up by blundering into a war which lost him half of it; and upwards of two millions of good honest British subjects were driven to rebellion by his obstinate determination to be at all costs their master and their "King." This great catastrophe in North America was the direct outcome and sequel of George's personal success in gaining control over the Government at home. Here too he meant to be master; and Parliament put up but a sorry fight against him. Politics were too corrupt for the few honest men to tell; and little

by little George won the upper hand. But it took time. The Whigs' influence was still strong; their ranks were numerous; they monopolised the machinery of patronage and intrigue. Yet, happily for George, their very numbers and the nature of their methods were a source of weakness too. Intrigue is a double-edged weapon. Thieves always fall out in the end; and the Whig Party, once so strong and so staunch a combination, was now divided into innumerable factions. Each great Whig magnate had his followers or "friends"; each was intensely jealous of his rivals; and any opportunity was welcomed to stab them in the back. So George was able to play off one against the other, until the time was ripe and the party of his own followers was fully formed.

His first choice, after Bute's resignation, was the Whig, George Grenville. But Grenville was a failure. He began by losing his popularity in London through the tactless prosecution of a journalist called Wilkes for an article directed against George. He then lost the confidence of George himself by showing too much inclination to dictate. So he was superseded; and Lord Rockingham, another Whig, was put into his place. Rockingham, however, did not stay for long. His view that Wilkes had been unjustly treated brought down the royal displeasure on his head, and he went the way of Grenville the next year. For want of a better alternative, George now turned back to Pitt. The old quarrel was glossed over; Pitt readily believed that the country stood in need of him once more; and under the new title of the Earl of Chatham he again entered into power. But his health was now precarious; his ancient fire was spent; and soon he too retired, leaving his colleague Grafton to carry on the Government alone. Such chopping and changing was of course deplorable, but it was all in King George's game. During these "stop-gap" ministries he was industriously at work building up the party of *his* "friends." All shame was cast aside; and he made no secret of the means he used. Did a member of Parliament retire or die; before the day was out, George was considering the selection of a suitable successor. Political agents, acting in his interest, purchased the right to nominate men for Parliamentary seats and paid enormous prices. To secure the needful votes in Windsor borough he actually hired houses in the town, and made them over to the nominal tenancy of his game-keepers or cooks. Bribes he handed round with a generous prodigality; and, since the royal pocket-money was drawn from the public funds, George proved, as someone has remarked, a most expensive King. Such tactics, however, fulfilled their purpose well. Before ten years were out from his accession, George had the House securely in his clutches. The Whigs were routed; royal nominees, who fancied themselves Tories, were filling up the benches; and, when in 1770 Grafton's retirement aptly cleared the way, George was at length able to promote a man after his own heart—Lord North. North was a pleasant fellow with a pretty wit and great gifts of fluent speech. He was tenacious, obstinate, and even plucky at a crisis; but

he lacked principle, and, more loyal to his King than to his country, he allowed himself to become a willing tool. He was wise enough to see where George's insane policies were leading; but in his own interest he was also wise enough to hold his tongue. He had made the fatal compact and he stood by it to the end. He acquiesced in a treatment of the colonies of which in his secret heart he disapproved; when the great rebellion came, he admitted his conviction of the error; then buckled to once more in pursuance of a policy which he had long thought to be mistaken, which he knew now to be fatal, and which he was yet prepared to carry through to its bitter and irreparable end. A zeal so dishonest, so misguided, yet so unswervingly loyal and self-consistent, almost compels our admiration along with our contempt.

II

Attitude to Colonies.—The alienation of the Thirteen British Colonies in North America was a prolonged and gradual process. It began directly upon the close of the Seven Years' War. Twelve years then passed in futile argument and growing bitterness before the first open blows were struck; and, though it was North himself who finally clinched the matter, most of the preceding ministries had had a share in it and in one way or another helped to prepare the way for the calamity. Before, however, we can relate their acts in detail, it is necessary to grasp well the general situation, and to appreciate the attitude of mind in which the British Government approached the whole question of colonial policy. Colonies were not in those days, as they are to-day, a source of confidence or pride. Nobody much troubled about making maps with the lands of the British Empire coloured red. No one noted as yet with a glow of satisfaction how the sun was cheered upon his daily travels by the continual presence of the Union Jack. British interest in the colonies began and ended with the consideration of *what good the British could get out of them.*

The first and most obvious advantage was their trade, and to the best of England's ability she had ensured that all their trade—in exports as well as imports—should be conducted exclusively with herself. By the famous Navigation Act of 1651, no goods might be transported either to or from British colonies except on British ships. That Act was still in force; and besides this England kept a strict watch upon the nature of the goods that the colonies sent over. Manufactures or raw materials such as were likely to compete with home industries were ruthlessly excluded. The interest of the home-country was considered paramount; and the interest of the colonies was at all points sacrificed thereto. It is therefore important to remember that throughout the coming struggle the Americans were wholly and solely dependent upon England, whether as a market for their produce or as a source of their supplies. The second idea—more justifiable in the

main—was this; that the colonies should make some contribution to the British revenues.

Now, it is true that, apart from a crown deputy sent out from England, most of the states were now self-governing. They elected their own parliaments, made their own laws, and, as far as all local matters were concerned, managed their own finance. But there was another side to the question; for the fleet and army which the British revenues supported were employed, in part at least, for the colonies' protection. This truth had been abundantly brought home in recent years. The overthrow of France in Canada had come as an inestimable boon to the colonials, but the victory was due in the main to British troops; it had been an expensive business; and it seemed only fair that those who had reaped most profit from the war should also take their share in the burden of its cost. To tax the colonies as well as to control their trade was, therefore, a right which nobody in England ever doubted to be hers; and to these two principles the British Government adhered with a blind unquestioning confidence in the righteousness of their behaviour and the justice of their case. It would be unfair, however, to suppose the British Government more selfish or short-sighted in this matter than the governments of other European countries. On the contrary, England's attitude was, if anything, more generous and enlightened than was the custom of the times. She went to considerable lengths in the attempt to conciliate the American colonials; and had not the colonials been bred of a particularly stiff-necked stock, she would probably have succeeded in retaining their allegiance. The point rather to be noted is that she realised only in the dimmest fashion the importance of retaining it. Her overseas possessions were then, let us remember, a comparatively recent acquisition; the idea of a world empire had appealed as yet to very few; and the theory of the times was that colonies were a mixed blessing—useful for commercial purposes, but otherwise a nuisance. No one regarded them as a source of national strength. No one expected them to remain so in perpetuity. They were like the fruit on a tree, destined, as soon as ever they were ripe, to drop off from the parent stem.

Grenville's Stamp Act.—Such then were the ideas and motives which inspired the unhappy policy of George's ministers. It was George Grenville, Bute's successor, who first set the ball a-rolling; and, seeing the circumstances in which he stood, we cannot altogether blame him if he failed to see to what goal its course would tend. At the close of the Seven Years' War England was overwhelmed by her load of debt. She needed every penny which could be scraped together; and Grenville was shocked to learn that the total sum collected at the colonial custom-houses amounted only to a paltry £2000 per annum. The plain fact was that the dues imposed by England on the imports and exports of America were habitually evaded. Smuggling was taking place on an enormous scale, and Americans had come to regard illicit trading almost as their privilege and right. Grenville did what he

could to screw things up, and to sharpen the vigilance of the custom-house officials. This step in itself was most unpopular, but it did not stand alone. The maintenance of a small standing army in America was then held to be essential, and, in order to make the colonies contribute to its upkeep, Grenville proceeded to introduce a novel tax.¹ This tax, known as the Stamp Tax, though now so famous in history, was in itself a trifling matter. Henceforward every legal document drawn up between colonials was to receive a stamp which could be purchased at a price from the British Government officials. Thus from every civil contract—for the purchase of a property, the transference of title deeds, execution of a will or whatever it might be—a small sum was to accrue to the British Treasury.

From so insignificant a spark was the great conflagration kindled; for it was the Stamp Act more than all else which first aroused in the colonials the bitter spirit of resistance. They protested, they argued, and, finding argument quite useless, they finally refused point blank to buy the stamps. It was not so much the form of the tax itself that they objected to as the principle which it involved. Most of them came, it must be remembered, from an extremely independent, freedom-loving stock. They were the grandsons and great-grandsons of the Puritan emigrants of the preceding century; and long exile had not increased their affection for a land which had treated their ancestors so scurvily. They had never loved England very much, and since Canada had been conquered, and the French menace on their border thus removed, they had ceased any more to look to her even for protection and support. All they asked was to be left alone; and, taxed if they must be, they would have preferred at least to settle the manner of taxation at their own convenience. By what right, they asked, should a small group of men in London arrange the business of self-governing communities three thousand miles away? The British Parliament was not their Parliament. They sent no members to its consultations; and, by a principle as old as Magna Charta, free citizens were under no obligation to pay taxes except with their own or their representatives' consent. "No Taxation without Representation" became henceforth their cry. Obviously it would be an error to suppose that in these early days any clear understanding as yet existed of this great democratic principle. The eighteenth century colonials could hardly have conceived the possibility of sending representatives over to Great Britain. Nevertheless, they felt strongly that they had a grievance, because they themselves had never been consulted. As with their Puritan forefathers before them, nothing could rouse in them such obstinate resentment as any infringement of their "rights." An offence against their liberty was like an insult to their God; and they were prepared to die, if need be, rather than to abandon it.

¹ He first, however, gave the colonies a year to suggest a method of raising a contribution: this they refused to do, having in fact no joint-Parliament whereby to vote it.

Tea Tax and Boston Massacre.—The history of the whole long miserable quarrel which ensued makes but sad reading; there was blindness and obstinacy enough on either side, but on the side of the British ministers, at least, there was moral cowardice as well. They had neither the pluck to admit that they were wrong nor the courage to act as though they thought that they were right. What they gave with one hand they proceeded forthwith to take away with the other; and their half-hearted concessions were perhaps more galling to the colonies than even a consistent policy of coercion would have been. First, when Rockingham succeeded to George Grenville, he gave his consent to the withdrawal of the Stamp tax, but with the same breath he equally insisted on England's right to tax if she desired. Next, when the colonials were beginning to calm down again and the noise of this first quarrel had all but died away, a fresh and gratuitous insult was flung at them. While Pitt, who would have known better, was ill with gout, the brilliant and popular Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, imposed a fresh series of small taxes on paper, glass, and tea. The last, in particular, reawoke the colonies' resentment in all its former fury.

The Tea tax was actually a trifle—a mere 1s. on the pound—and, when all the tea imported to America was reckoned, it could not have brought in £500 a year. The Americans, it is true, were great tea-drinkers; it was their favourite beverage; yet the effect upon their comfort was as nothing compared with the blow dealt to their pride. Had it been a tax on something which they never even wanted, their indignation would have been the same. They protested, as usual, and, what was far more serious, they retaliated. The people of Massachusetts took the lead. A boycott was begun against English goods. They refused to buy the East Indian tea which English ships brought over; and, though it cost them many a shiver when the winds were cold, they refused the good woollen clothes which came from the English hand-looms. In their present mood they would rather have gone naked and starving than abandon the principle on which they had taken their stand. The boycott was a bold challenge and a severe blow to English traders; and the egregious Duke of Grafton, who now took on the Government from Pitt, was seriously perturbed. Retaliation, however, is a game which two can play; and, hoping to cow the colonials into submission, he proceeded to send troops across the water (as though soldiers could force any man to purchase tea or clothing against his own free will!). The troops when they arrived were quartered in Boston, the chief town of Massachusetts. The inhabitants, as was natural, received them with coldness and a dignified contempt; and the soldiers returned their coldness with insolent behaviour. The privates brawled; the officers got drunk; tempers went from bad to worse; and the air became electric. One March day in '70 the Boston mob waylaid a party of soldiers in the street and pelted them with snowballs. A volley of bullets was the answer, and three civilians fell. The uproar

was tremendous; bells rang, drums rolled; mass meetings collected; and, had not the garrison been tactfully withdrawn out of the town, still worse might have ensued. Other and more serious incidents soon attracted men's attention; but the Boston "Massacre" was not forgotten. It was first blood in a conflict which, come whatever might, could now only end one way.

Boston Tea-Party and the Blockade.—America in those days seemed very far away. It took six or seven weeks to cross the ocean; and at such a distance it was difficult for Englishmen to understand what Americans were feeling. Nevertheless, even before the news of the Boston massacre arrived, the Grafton Ministry had taken fright. Lord Grafton himself was prepared for an unconditional withdrawal of the obnoxious taxes. The Paper tax and Glass tax were actually withdrawn; but the Tea tax was the subject of a more prolonged debate. The King insisted on the importance of retaining it. Lord North, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, backed him up. Grafton faltered, gave way, and presently resigned. Lord North then stepped into his shoes, and the evil genius of coercion triumphed. The word went out that concessions were now ended; there was to be no more shilly-shally with the impudent colonials; and, simply to teach them a proper sense of their position, the Tea tax was ostentatiously maintained. This might sound well enough perhaps at Westminster; but no one could have failed more utterly than North to appreciate the temper of the men with whom he had to deal. He imagined that what annoyed them was the enhanced price, and that, provided tea were cheapened, the colonials would speedily be tempted into buying it. His plan, therefore, was this: the East India Company, which had been seriously affected by the refusal of the colonies to buy its tea, was now allowed permission to export direct to Boston instead of sending, as was usual, through an English port. Thus, while the price of tea would be lowered, the tax on tea would, at the same time, be maintained; and North believed that the Americans were simpletons enough to fall into the trap. It was a grotesque illusion. Nettled by the mere suggestion of so gross and obvious a bribe, the citizens of Boston resolved on their revenge. A party of young men, dressed up in paint and feathers like Red Indians, boarded the Company's vessels when they arrived in port and tipped the cargo wholesale overboard, "to see," as one of them mischievously remarked, "whether tea could be made with salt water." It was not a bad practical joke; but the Boston "tea-party" brought more serious consequences in its train than even the Boston massacre itself; for the violence of the colonials merely served to stiffen the backs of their oppressors. King George himself was adamant; and official reports from the other side of the water encouraged him to meditate revenge. "These men will be lions," he echoed with approval, "so long as we are lambs"; and Lord North, as usual, backed him up.¹

Boston's punishment was not long delayed. The harbour was forth-

¹ On the whole, too, it is probable that public opinion in England was behind him.

with ordered to be closed and its trade connections severed. Of Massachusetts a stern example was to be made: that State was to lose its Parliament, forego its rights of proved self-government, and be degraded to the ignominious rank of a crown-colony, controlled direct from England. Even in London voices were raised in protest against this monstrous measure. "These men are our children," Edmund Burke declared, "and when children ask for bread we are not right to offer them a stone." Fox spoke to the same purpose; but all in vain. The King and North were deaf to argument; they held on grimly to their chosen course. The blockade of Boston harbour was begun, and within a fortnight the pinch of want was making itself felt within the city. But succour was at hand. Supplies of every sort poured in from all sides; rice came from Carolina; Connecticut sent sheep; but, more valuable and more significant than such material tokens of their sympathy, the twelve surrounding colonies were answering the appeal of Massachusetts and taking measures to consult together on a plan of common action. Thus, in an evil hour, the old differences and feuds, which had long kept the various States aloof and jealous, were now cast spontaneously aside. There was opposition, of course; but those who disapproved of the policy of resistance were overpersuaded or coerced, and America spoke, or seemed to speak, as with one voice. The delegates of the Great Congress, which was called at Philadelphia, gave remarkable expression to this new-found unity. Like the old champions of liberty in England, they, too, drew up a Declaration of their Rights, claiming a free hand for their colonial parliaments in all internal matters of legislation and finance. It was a proud, an audacious, but, withal, a peaceful demonstration. War they still hoped, if possible, to avert. But war none the less was drawing daily nearer with ever quickening step.

Lexington.—Too late and too grudgingly North now essayed a compromise. He suggested in Parliament that any colony which should guarantee a fixed contribution to the King's Exchequer should be left free to raise the money in whatever fashion it preferred. The proposal, however, fell flat; and North, abandoning the attempt, turned once more to face the music. And, indeed, the music was now growing loud and menacing, with ugly sounds of tumult and sedition. Tales came of riot and mob rule, of English vessels burnt to the water's edge, of guns and ammunition secretly prepared. Gage, the military governor recently sent over, had discovered and seized a store of arms in the neighbourhood of Boston. Men were collecting and drilling in increasing numbers, and the Massachusetts Congress had voted them supplies. In April of '75 Gage learnt that the rebels were again collecting arms not far from Boston; and he dispatched a small contingent of his troops to seize them. As they passed the village of Lexington upon their outward march the red-coats fell in with a party of revolutionary militia, fired on them, and felled some half-a-dozen. The bad news spread fast; more colonists soon gathered; and, when later in the day the English were returning to their camp at Boston, they found themselves suddenly sur-

rounded on the road. They fought their way through, though not without serious loss; but, as they struggled home, only too thankful to escape from worse disaster, they realised that at last the day had come. The war had opened; and opened with an ominous defeat for British arms.

III

The Declaration.—It was in April of 1775 that the disastrous skirmish at Lexington took place. Next year on the ever-memorable day, July the Fourth, the Congress of Philadelphia issued another manifesto abjuring all allegiance to the British Crown, and solemnly declar-

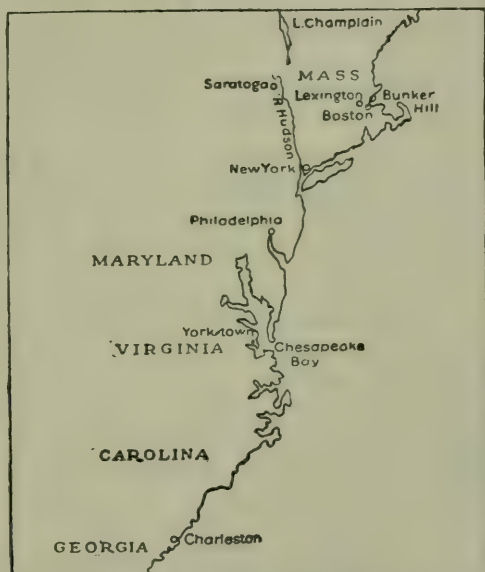


FIG. 38.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

ing the Independence of the "United States of America." In 1783, after eight chequered years of desultory warfare, a treaty was signed at Versailles whereby the historic claim was countersigned by England, and the American colonies passed out of England's keeping for ever. From a military standpoint, and when all the resources of English generalship and man-power are computed, such an issue must appear well-nigh incredible; yet from first to last conditions were against the mother country, and the task of defeating the colonials was by no means so easy as it seemed. The problem of organisation alone was overwhelming. At no period of the war did England succeed in putting more than forty thousand men into the field; and in days when steamships were not invented, and when the voyage occupied six solid weeks, it was no trifling matter to transport these troops across three thousand miles of ocean,

and there to keep them furnished with ammunition and supplies. For this purpose a line of communications had to be maintained, and when other nations came into the war against England, this placed an almost intolerable strain upon the British fleet. By land the warfare was of a character least advantageous to European troops, and the climate, whether in the cold winters of the north or in the hot unhealthy summers of the south, was almost equally demoralising.

On the other hand, the enemy himself was ill prepared. What troops he had were raw, untrained, and at first scantily equipped with obsolete muskets and clumsy rust-eaten cannon. When, too, it came to military action, the show of unity displayed at Philadelphia was hopeless to seek. Each state preferred to raise a little local army of its own, and jealously refused to part with its protection or lend assistance to the central force. In fact, the revolt would have fizzled out within a year, had it not been for the invincible determination of a single man. It was George Washington, and he alone, who kept the cause together. From the day of Braddock's defeat at Fort Duquesne he had lived a soldier's life, learning to find his way over mountain or through thicket, and to sleep in any weather under an open sky. Nothing could tire him; nothing could daunt his faith in the great cause. In the darkest hours of defeat and disappointment he at least was always ready to hold on, and when half of his force had fallen, and the other half were dispersing to their homes, he would remain to rally fresh contingents and lead them against the enemy once more.

Bunker Hill and Saratoga.—The war lasted eight years, and during the three first of these at least the scene of action lay wholly in the north. Lord Howe, who was sent out to take command, clung for some while to his headquarters in Boston, and the result of his first sortie against Bunker Hill was not encouraging. He attacked this neighbouring height without due thought or preparation. The colonials were deeply entrenched; it took three separate assaults to drive them out; and the victory, such as it was, cost Howe nearly half his men. Next year, however, he moved further afield, shifting his headquarters southward from Boston to Long Island, capturing New York, and driving back Washington upon the hinterland. This success inspired a bolder plan of action for the next year's campaign.

The scheme which was hatched in London was as follows: General Burgoyne was to advance from Canada, Lord Howe was to join him from New York, and their combined forces were to hold the Hudson Valley, thus dividing the rebels of New England from the rebels of the south. This grand scheme, however, was sadly bungled by the War Office in London, and the dispatch which should have kept him in touch with Burgoyne's movements never reached Lord Howe. He went off on a fool's errand against Philadelphia, hoping presumably to discredit the rebel Congress by the capture of the town. The task proved more difficult than he had fancied. Washington hung on his flank and refused to be shaken off. The summer passed without anything to show for it.

Winter followed; and it was not till the August after that Lord Howe's troops effected their entry into Philadelphia. Meanwhile Burgoyne had started in accordance with the plan. He passed up the Richelieu River, and reached Ticonderoga of ill-fame; but as yet no sign appeared of the army from the south. Hampered by an enormous train of baggage, and harassed by rebel sharpshooters and Indians, he lumbered on as far as Saratoga; but of Howe there was still no sign. With every day the colonial skirmishers became more numerous; Burgoyne's nerve was shaken; the communications in his rear were cut; and he at last decided to retreat. But it was now too late. His spent and starving army was unequal to the task, and on the 6th of August they surrendered to a man. The news of that surrender put fresh heart into the rebels. It spread consternation among the councils of the King, and, above all, it gave the Americans a new and invaluable ally. This last fact was decisive, for summoning, as it did, the Frenchmen to their aid, the colonials' victory at Saratoga proved the turning-point of the whole campaign.

France and Pitt.—The Seven Years' War and the humiliation which it brought her had been neither forgiven nor forgotten by France. During the interval she had husbanded her resources and built up an efficient fleet, and, as she awaited an opportunity to use it, she had watched with unfeigned satisfaction the outbreak of the war in North America and the growing embarrassment of British arms. The surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga now decided her, and in 1779 she entered the struggle at the colonials' side, an example soon to be followed first by Spain and then by Holland. Thus England was once more faced by a hostile continental combination, and this time without a continental friend. The two most formidable fleets of Europe threatened her, and her peril was so obvious that even Lord North quailed. Many of the Opposition were for making terms with the colonials. Burke and Fox urged that their independence should be recognised. But at this supreme crisis, as on a similar occasion twenty years before, all eyes turned instinctively to Pitt. The old man's fighting days, indeed, were over; he was far past politics. Prolonged gout had left him physically a wreck, and at times even his clear brain was clouded by hallucination. Yet he roused himself to a last heroic effort. The long and futile quarrel with the colonies had cut him to the quick, and he had never approved of the King's policy. "We have no right under Heaven," he had told the House of Lords, "to tax America." When the war began, he had prophesied its failure. "You may ravage," he had said, "but you can never conquer"; and surely enough his words were coming true. But now when he saw France, his life-long enemy, ranged with the colonies against England, his whole attitude underwent a sudden transformation. He came down to the House supported on two crutches; the Lords stood up in line to let him pass, and then in awe-struck silence listened to the passionate rhetoric of his last appeal. "My Lords," he said, "I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me; that I am still alive to

lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and most noble monarchy! Shall this great kingdom now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon? *If we must fall, let us fall like men.*" A moment or two after he staggered, collapsed in a swoon upon his neighbour's arms, and was carried from the House a dying man. So by fate's cruel irony he had lived just long enough to see his life's work ruined and the triumphs of his manhood thrown away, when the strength to strike yet a second blow was his no longer. It was France's hour of revenge.

Gibraltar.—It was clear from the outset that the additional struggle in which England now found herself involved with France and Spain must be an entirely maritime affair. Her hands were too fully occupied in North America to undertake land operations elsewhere, and she now possessed no allies to undertake them for her. Even at sea the task confronting her navy was tremendous. The French and Spanish fleets were very powerful, and, had not their admirals adopted a defensive strategy in the main, it must have gone hardly with England. As it was, she was practically compelled to leave the Mediterranean unpoliced, with the result that Minorca fell once more into French hands. Gibraltar, which General Elliot was left to hold as best he could with seven thousand men, was attacked from the land side by the Spanish, and from '79 onwards laid under close siege. For three years the garrison held out against enormous odds, and, though revictualled by Rodney in the second year, they suffered terribly from starvation and disease. The ordeal, however, reached its climax, when in 1782 the enemy proceeded to organise a grand assault by sea as well as land. 33,000 men and over a hundred ships took part in this attack. Floating batteries were mounted on enormous rafts, and a new type of cannon was employed which discharged its balls red hot. The British, however, rose to the occasion. Their fire set the floating batteries alight, blowing both guns and gunners into the air. The grant assault collapsed, and, thanks to Elliot's magnificent defence, Gibraltar remained England's. Meanwhile the centre of action between the opposing fleets had shifted to the further side of the Atlantic. The enemy divided his attention between capturing the smaller and weaker of England's West Indian Islands and lending assistance to the Americans on land. Rodney, the British admiral, was on the whole successful in keeping his own end up, and, though when the British land forces were driven to surrender he was absent from the scene, his revenge was not long delayed. In 1782 he caught the French fleet off a small group of islands called "the Saints," and beat them handsomely. His tactics were as novel as they were audacious. Instead of fighting a mere broadside battle of the accustomed type, he adopted a stratagem which Nelson afterwards made famous, breaking through the enemy's line at two separate points, and hammering the isolated portion of their fleet to pieces before the rest could manœuvre to its aid. Only an unaccountable failure to press his victory home saved the French from complete annihilation. Rodney,

indeed, was one of the few men who came out of the war with flying colours; yet even he was relieved of his command by the ungrateful Government.

Yorktown.—This war, however, was not, like the previous war, to be decided mainly on the seas. The reduction of the colonists was after all the chief object of England's efforts; and this, as Pitt had prophesied, was to prove beyond her power. Nevertheless, the scene of her defeat was not to lie in the neighbourhood of Boston or New York. Soon after the entry of France into the war, the English had undertaken other operations further south. Among the southern colonies of Georgia, Carolina, and Virginia were many aristocratic landowners, who were royalists by extraction and still loyalists at heart. Counting on their support the British command landed a fresh army on the coast of Georgia, which captured Charleston, pushed north through Carolina to Virginia, and there took up its position at Yorktown on Chesapeake Bay. Cornwallis, the commander of this force, was no contemptible soldier; but, while he appeared at first to be sweeping all before him, he was in reality marching to his doom. The British northern army under Clinton, still quartered at New York, made no move to reinforce him. His own troops were totally inadequate to hold the ground which he had conquered in his rear; and presently a new and most unwelcome enemy appeared upon the scene—a French fleet under the Comte de Grasse. The small British squadron which patrolled the coast was unable to hold its own against these new arrivals; and Cornwallis soon found himself in perilous isolation, cut off from all hope of reinforcement or supply by sea. Yet there was worse to follow. For plans were now afoot to attack him and overwhelm him from the land as well.

Washington had hitherto been watching Clinton's army at New York; but, as soon as he got news of the French fleet's arrival in Chesapeake Bay, his mind was immediately made up. He breathed not a word of his intention to a single soul: he forestalled the suspicions of the English by supplying them deliberately with garbled information which kept Clinton immobile at New York. He then withdrew all the forces that could possibly be spared from the northern area, and marched them at top speed four hundred miles down country toward Cornwallis's Yorktown camp. Reinforcements poured in to him from every side; and, when the American forces closed in upon Cornwallis, they outnumbered him by more than two to one. Desperate messages for help went north to Clinton; but Clinton still delayed; and, when in late autumn he at last moved south, it was to find the worst had happened. Demoralised by the hot unwholesome climate and overwhelmed by the bombardment of the rebel guns, the British force at Yorktown had failed to hold its own. Their attempt at retreat had been frustrated and Cornwallis's army had surrendered to a man.

The news fell on England like a thunderclap. "Oh God! it is all over," North is said to have exclaimed; and seeing the hopelessness of his position he resigned. King George, like Pharaoh of old, still hard-

ened his heart and endeavoured to hold on. But popular feeling was too strong for him. The London magnates passed a sweeping protest against the continuance of the war: "Your armies are captured," they declared roundly to the King; "the wonted superiority of your navies is annihilated; your dominions are lost." And George was finally compelled to bow to fate. Peace was signed at Versailles in '83. A few minor changes were effected. Florida and Minorca were given to Spain; some of England's West Indian Islands went to France; the rest she got back. But the Treaty's main provision concerned America. The independence of the United States was thereby recognised. The infant Republic, one day destined to span the mighty continent from sea to sea, was thus launched on its career; and George Washington, the hero of its battlefields, became its first President upon the dawn of peace. It was perhaps the worst humiliation which England has ever suffered. There was one bright spot, however, to relieve the general British gloom. Canada had been loyal throughout the war and remained England's still; so equally did India. If Chatham had lived long enough to see that day, it would have comforted him to know that of all his work this part at least had not been wholly in vain.

In judging the rights and wrongs of this whole unhappy business we must beware of regarding the actions of either the British or the Americans in the light of England's modern principles. Neither could then have foreseen the possibility of such a solution as that which has given Canada or Australia complete liberty of action while retaining them as members of the British Empire. Yet, on the other hand, when Englishmen consider the final outcome from the broader standpoint of world history, they do not altogether regret the victory of the colonial cause. For the British people faced with the task of populating Canada and Australia, and of governing India and large tracts of Africa, the burden is sufficiently overwhelming without the addition of further responsibilities. Had the control of all North America been added to it, it is a question whether England's shoulders would have been broad enough to bear the weight. Things are better as they are. For the United States, while working out their national destiny in their own independent way, have none the less remained true in the great essentials to the principles, and traditions of the mother-land. Throughout their subsequent history the influence of their Anglo-Saxon origin is writ large. We may note the innate conservatism of their constitution for nearly sixty years after its foundation, and which even now forbids any vital change without the backing of an almost unanimous opinion in the state. Yet, as in England too, the very consolidation of their national democracy under a strong central executive has been won in the teeth of a vigorous sentiment of individual and local independence, which, though overruled and regulated has neither been abandoned nor destroyed. In foreign policy the same holds good. The "Monroe Doctrine" is strictly in line with the "splendid isolation" of British nineteenth century policy. The idealism which, in the mouth of President

Wilson, preached the Freedom of the Seas, is an echo of far-off Elizabethan days, when English mariners championed the cause against Spain. Even the Anglo-Saxon urge towards imperialist expansion has found its outlet in the annexation of Hawaii, the Philippines and Porto Rico. Above all the Anglo-Saxon instinct for generous compromise and tempered liberty is manifest enough in the history of both countries. Both have drawn fresh strength from civil struggles, waged and won for a high principle and composed with wise moderation. Both have resisted threats of world tyranny with unstinted expenditure of blood and treasure. Seen in the light of an ultimate identity of ideals, it is no tragedy for England that the younger nation should have asserted an independence if it be employed to carry forward and interpret what is best in the traditions of the old.

CHAPTER X.

INDIA

It was perhaps King George's fortune rather than his fault that England retained her hold on India. The long arm of royal interference, employed to so ruinous a purpose in North America, was hardly long enough to reach into the East. Space alone set something of a bar to such meddlesome activities; for, if the voyage from Bristol to New York then took a good six weeks, the route round the Cape to India could seldom be accomplished in less than as many months. Nor, strictly speaking, were English settlements at Calcutta and Madras to be reckoned as Crown property at all. The occupation had been from the first a commercial enterprise; and a commercial enterprise it still remained. The East India Company might fly the Union Jack and summon British regiments to its aid; but its possessions and its profits, its forts and its officials, belonged, not to His Majesty King George, but to the various private gentlemen in England who were fortunate enough to own its valuable shares. In short, if anyone controlled the destinies of British India, it was the Company's directors appointed to go out and administer affairs upon the spot. Hence the early governors, for better or for worse, were given a remarkably free hand. They understood far better than their employers home in London the peculiar problems of the East; and, though they did not choose to imitate the methods of Dupleix or assume the pomp and trappings of a native prince, they at least carried things with a high hand and undertook the most tremendous policies with the irresponsibility of monarch. For men were bound to adapt themselves to their surroundings; and, if the governors acted in an autocratic manner, it was because no other means existed whereby a single European could command a million Asiatics. If they made at times too free a use of force, it was because force was the argument which the native could most readily understand. If they resorted

occasionally to fraud, it was because the Oriental rarely knew any other code than to cheat or to be cheated. Judged by European standards, much that was done was shameful, and, though the governors enjoyed great licence while in India, they could not escape the critics when their term was up. Whig politicians, who had never seen a native in their lives, but loved to prate of liberty and the rights of man, denounced with gusto the monstrous tyrannies of a Clive or a Warren Hastings, and assailed them on evidence at which the Great Mogul would have snapped his royal fingers in contempt. Yet, whatever were their errors or their crimes, these great men had deserved well both of England and of India; and the censure of their critics missed the mark, because it utterly ignored the circumstances in which they had been placed. "My God! Mr. Chairman," exclaimed Clive, when taxed with a present he accepted from Mir Jaffar, "at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation."

The Company's Task.—With the close of the Seven Years' War, British permanence in India was finally assured. French rivalry was at an end. Plassey had given England Bengal, and Wandewash had removed all menace to Madras. Yet the actual territory England held was small—the lower Ganges basin in the north, a few scattered strips along the southeast coast, and a mere station on the west—nor was it her policy for the next thirty years to add to these possessions. Rather it was her task to render her whole position in India more stable and secure. For the country was still in a wild turmoil. The break-up of the Mogul Empire had rent it into a thousand warring factions, and the hand of every prince was against his neighbour. Of all the powers, however, which were at enmity with peace, the most dreaded and the most destructive was the great robber race of the Mahrattas, who now held sway over a wide strip of central India stretching from sea to sea. This formidable scourge was a constant menace to the safety of English settlements; and war after war was undertaken to reduce it. Between 1776 and 1782 there were many fierce encounters; yet the Mahratta terror was then but barely checked. At the end of the century (as we shall see) British arms were more successful; but it was not until after Waterloo was fought that this vigorous tribe was thoroughly subdued. Their activities, however, had one good effect; for the fear they instilled into other native princes gave England the opportunity for improving her relations elsewhere. Once recognised as allies and protectors, it was easy for England to extend the area of her influence; and, though it was not till the time of the Napoleonic wars that she added to her territorial conquests, her prestige was in the meanwhile steadily increasing, and with every year that passed it was becoming plainer that the British power alone could rescue India from interminable chaos.

But, while this truth was slow to force itself home upon the native mind, there was equally for England another lesson to be mastered. She had blundered into possession, as has above been shown, in the pursuit of trade; but she had hardly as yet become conscious of a mission, or

seen that, if India was ever to be permanently hers, she must be governed, not in England's interest, but in her own. Hitherto high dividends had been the main object of the enterprise; and the Company's directors thought of little else. Though vast profits were derived from the increasing trade, the methods by which these profits were obtained were not considered; and the servants of the Company were still abominably paid. The unfortunate result was this: that, to compensate for the poorness of their salaries, the officials looked to recoup themselves by plundering the natives. Every species of extortion, blackmail, and fraud was practised without shame; and men, who were legitimately earning no more than a clerk's pittance, came home from India with enormous fortunes. The retiring "nabob," as he was dubbed at home, was already a by-word for his luxurious habits and his purse well filled with ill-gotten rupees wrung from the helpless natives during his sojourn in the East. In short, the real problem confronting England in India was not so much the extension of her conquests as the reform of her administrative system and the better regulation of finance.

Clive's Reforms.—Such, then, was the situation when Clive was again sent out in 1765 as Governor of Bengal. He remained only a year and a half; but during that time he showed himself no less great as a statesman than as a general on the field. His first step was to place the government of Bengal on a firm and regular basis. Since the day when Mir Jaffar had been set up in Surajah Dowlah's place, the real power had, of course, passed out of the hands of the native ruler; but he still continued to exercise his functions and to raise the revenues himself, though he paid over the bulk of them to the English Company. The result of this was woeful mismanagement and a twofold system of extortion; and Clive at once determined to bring it to an end. In the name of the Company he proceeded to take over the entire control. The Nabob was reduced to a mere titular puppet with an annual allowance to support him, while the whole management of the province—the collecting of the taxes, the maintenance of order, and the administration of justice—was vested in the Company itself. It was a vital and beneficial change; for it became henceforth England's interest (as it was undoubtedly her duty) to see that taxes were fairly assessed and properly collected; and in principle, at any rate, if not as yet in practice, equity was thereby substituted for a policy of plunder. But this reform would not alone suffice unless the private avarice of individuals was also kept in check. The Company itself refused to rectify the scandal of low wages; but Clive, on his own responsibility, diverted a part of the revenue to this necessary purpose. He then followed up the change by making it illegal for any servant of the Company to take bribes or gifts from natives. The new rule, however, was difficult to enforce, and it had barely begun to take effect when Clive, who alone had the strength or courage to enforce it, was compelled by ill-health to relinquish his command. His reforms had given check to the evil; but they had certainly not cured it; and meanwhile at home they had won for Clive the

bitter enmity of the Company's shareholders, who were far less interested in justice and good government than in the annual balance-sheet. Reform, so they imagined, would affect their purse; and they took a

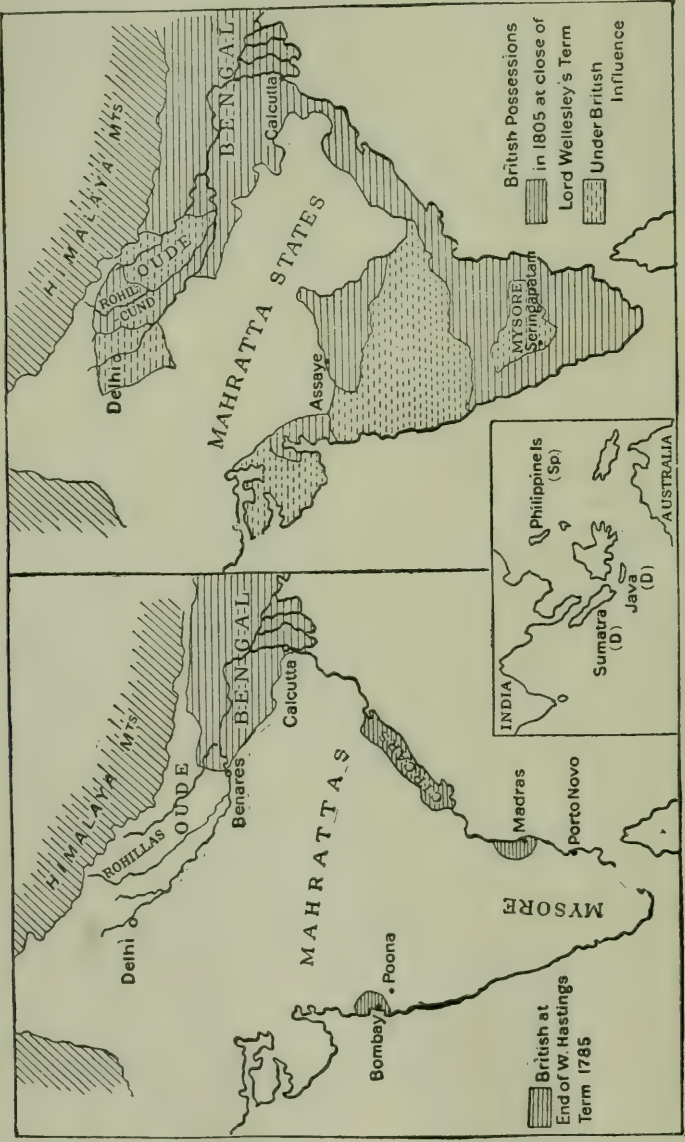


FIG. 39.—THE CONQUEST OF INDIA.

mean revenge. In his earlier days Clive had scarcely practised the principles he now was preaching: he had taken bribes from natives; and on this score he was assailed. His case was carried before Parliament, where the Company was strong, and there after long discussions

the verdict was returned that, although he had rendered "great and meritorious services" to Britain, Clive had employed his powers in India to obtain illicit gains. The cruelty of this ingratitude had a terrible effect upon his failing health. His mind became partially unhinged; and in 1774 he ended his brilliant and honourable career—as in youth he had twice so nearly forestalled it—by committing suicide.

Once Parliament's eyes had been opened to the scandals of the Company's misrule, it became imperative to interfere still further. No attempt, indeed, was made as yet to relieve the directors of their main responsibility; and it was not until the years following the Mutiny that India was taken under the direct authority of Parliament. In 1773, however, an Act was passed by Lord North's Government which was designed to set the Company's administration upon a more constitutional and efficient footing. The directors were still to retain, as in the past, their right of appointing and controlling their officials; but for the future such appointments were, in the first place, to be submitted for the approval of the King, and, in the second place, they were to follow certain definite lines which the Act itself laid down. Thus there was to be one Governor-General for all British Indian provinces. With him was to be associated a Council of four persons, three votes in which were sufficient to defeat and overrule the Governor himself; while side by side with the Governor and Council and altogether outside their jurisdiction there was to be another body of independent power called the Supreme Court of Justice. Such were the provisions of the Regulating Act of 1773. A worse machinery for strong and effective government could scarcely have been devised; and thus from the start obstacles which would have been insurmountable to a less able man were set across the path of the first Governor-General, Warren Hastings.

Hastings' Difficulties.—Hastings was no stranger to the East. He had been a Company's clerk in early days. Once he had fallen as a prisoner into Surajah Dowlah's hands. He had survived and risen to be Governor of Calcutta two years before he entered the new office of Governor-General for all India. He knew the country like a book, spoke the native lingo fluently, and, what is more, could penetrate the recesses of the Oriental mind. Very different were his colleagues of the newly-appointed Council. One of them indeed was an old member of the service and gave Hastings his support; but the other three were ignorant of the East and bitterly opposed to Hastings' policy; while one in particular, Francis by name, was a man of singularly mean and spiteful character. Between such men and Hastings there could be no peace; and, by the peculiar constitution of the Council, Hastings, if out-voted by three out of the four, was altogether powerless. Friction sprang up at once. The Governor-General was thwarted at every turn. His authority was reduced to a shadow; and the natives, quick to spurn a fallen potentate, joined eagerly in the attack. The climax came when a certain ill-conditioned Brahmin, of the name of Nuncomar, put into Francis' hands a serious list of charges against Hastings' administration.

Everyone knew that an old grudge had inspired this base attack; for Nuncomar had been imprisoned for forgery by Hastings, and subsequently refused promotion to a much coveted post. Nevertheless, Francis and his friends took up the charge, and things looked black for Hastings. But Hastings was a man of indomitable spirit, and he was not beaten yet. There was now established at Calcutta the Supreme Court of Justice of which we spoke above, and which was, as we then noted, independent of the Council of Five. Impey, its President, was Hastings' friend; and, to the surprise of all and not least of Nuncomar, he suddenly put the engine of the law in motion. Nuncomar was arrested on the charge of felony committed, so it was alleged, six years before. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged; and despite the vigorous efforts of the Francis party, despite the peculiar sanctity attaching to the prisoner's Brahmin caste, the sentence of the court was carried out. Hastings' enemies had been outplayed; and though the feud still lingered, rising on one occasion to so fierce a pitch that a duel was actually fought between the rivals, yet by slow degrees the Governor-General came into his own. A vacancy on the Council gave him for a while an equality of votes; and, when in 1780 Francis went back to England, Hastings was at length complete master of the situation. The absurd provisions of the Regulating Act were no more to shackle progress; for, before another Governor came out, the bad system had been changed.

Hastings' Achievements.—Meanwhile, during his thirteen years of office,¹ whether in good fortune or ill, opposed or unopposed, Hastings had done great things. Fighting had been incessant, perilous, yet on the whole successful for British arms. The Mahrattas were once again upon the war-path, and were bullying their neighbours right and left. First in the north they had threatened Rohileund, a subject province of England's friend the Vizier of Oude. Oude had become her ally in the days of Clive; and the Vizier's appeal for help was answered readily by Hastings. He assisted in pushing the Mahrattas back; then, finding or suspecting that the folk of Rohileund were themselves in league with the enemy, he had joined the Vizier in suppressing them. The campaign was ruthlessly conducted, and brought a deal of obloquy on Hastings' head. But from this time onward and for many years to come peace reigned to the northwest of Bengal (1774). The next trouble with the Mahrattas came in the region of Bombay, now England's chief settlement upon the western coast. There, most unwisely and against all Hastings' wishes, British authorities had supported a claimant to the throne of Poona. This brought down the Mahrattas on the English in a twinkling, and Hastings only retrieved a desperate situation by dispatching reinforcements from Bengal across the whole breadth of India. Yet more serious trouble was even now in store. For, just when British resources were thus severely strained, the Mahrattas found in the south two valuable allies. One was England's old enemy

¹ Governor of Calcutta, 1772-1774; Governor-General of British India, 1774-1785.

the French, who, on entering the war of the American Rebellion, had revived their slumbering designs on India. The other was Hyder Ali, the "Sultan" of Mysore, a very able and ambitious native who had raised and trained a formidable army, and carved out for himself by an adventurous policy a considerable empire in the south. Hastings was not slow to realise the danger. His plan of campaign was sketched out within a day; and Sir Eyre Coote, the veteran hero of the fight at Wandewash, was sent south to deal with Hyder Ali. Coote caught him at Porto Novo, and won a decisive victory against enormous odds. Hyder Ali himself died in the year following; the French meanwhile had been defeated on the sea,¹ and the critical days were over. Thus, as Hastings' term of office drew to its close, he could justly claim to have brought England through her troubles; and, though he knew as no one else could know how perilously near she had been to total ruin, his nerve had stood the test. The British position in India, as he left it, was immeasurably stronger than it had ever been before.

Hastings' real genius, however, inclined rather to the arts of peace than of war. Organisation was his special talent; and there was need of it. The Company's affairs were in an inextricable tangle. Despite the immense profits which went home to the shareholders, the provincial administration was invariably in debt. The collection of the revenues was left to native agents who did their best to swindle both their employers and the peasants. There was no regular machinery for the settling of disputes, no proper law-courts, no police. All this Hastings set himself to remedy. He divided up Bengal into administrative districts. He instituted a force to maintain order. He set up a court in Calcutta where natives could be tried under a code of Hindu law. He appointed English "collectors" to superintend taxation, and provided proper machinery for its assessment. In short, he did so much to purify and regulate the Indian Civil Service that he became the object of an almost extravagant veneration and esteem. He was regarded in Bengal much as the Romans regarded Julius Cæsar; and the obsequious natives, it is said, actually raised a temple in his honour, and for long years after cherished the memory of the Sahib Warren Hostein, not so much as a hero as a god.

Hastings' Impeachment.—Very different was the welcome which awaited him in England, when in 1785 he laid his burden down. Francis was lying in wait for him; and Edmund Burke, the great Whig orator, took up the task of exposing his misdeeds. His more high-handed acts were closely scrutinised. There was the hanging of Nuncomar. There was the extermination of the Rohilla tribesmen. More notorious still perhaps was his treatment of the two princesses of Oude, known as the Munny Begums. These two disreputable old ladies had appropriated enormous treasure from the Vizier's public chest, and, when they pro-

¹ The maritime supremacy, which England won during the middle of the eighteenth century and maintained during the wars that marked its close, was without doubt the really decisive factor in the struggle against France for the supremacy in India.

ceeded further to intrigue with his opponents, Hastings had clapped them in prison and compelled them to disgorge. The whole matter was grossly exaggerated. Tales were spread concerning the hideous tortures inflicted upon the Begums' inoffensive lackeys. And the upshot was that the retiring Governor-General was impeached for his misdeemeanours before the House of Lords.¹ In London, the trial was the sensation of the century; and Macaulay has described in his own inimitable manner the scene in the Great Hall at Westminster, where the Court of Justice sat—the peers in their robes and ermine, the scarlet hangings on the walls, the galleries crowded with the élite of town society, the high-flown eloquence of the accuser, the emotions of the fashionable audience, the fluttered handkerchiefs, the smelling-salts, the hysteria, and the sobs. The city buzzed with excitement; but, before the trial was half over, the public interest had had time to cool. For seven mortal years the trial dragged out its tedious length; then, when everyone had ceased to care about the issue, Hastings was acquitted and retired into private life. Over twenty years later he was summoned to attend at Westminster for a further enquiry. Men's ideas had been sifted out during the interval; and, when he departed, the House rose spontaneously to its feet. It was a conclusive verdict; and, as by this testimony of contemporary opinion, so before the bar of history the character of Hastings stands cleared.

Wellesley's Conquests.—The faulty constitution which had so much hampered Hastings in his office was revised in the very year of his return. This new India Bill of 1785, passed by the younger Pitt, corrected North's mistake; and henceforth the Governor-General was empowered, if need be, to override his colleagues on the Council. By the same Act, however, an even more important principle was introduced, which went half way at least to bringing India under the direct authority of Parliament. A "Board of Control," consisting of six Government nominees, was established in London and was entrusted with the general supervision of all Indian policy. The leading posts in the service were filled at its discretion, generally by men of high title or distinction; while the Company's function was for the future confined to the detailed administration on the spot. In other words, the Company governed India no longer in its own absolute right, but, as it were, on sufferance and as the British Crown's trustee.

With this change, as it so happened, the history of English occupation entered a new phase. The period of consolidation was now over, and the forward march of conquest was about to be resumed. From '93 and onwards England was again at war with France, and the French had not by any means abandoned hope of recovering India for themselves. They sent agents to stir up native princes against the English and officers to drill the native princes' troops. History repeats itself, and from their antagonism, just as in the days of Clive, England first suf-

¹ Whether or no injustice was done to Hastings, his trial was most certainly a most salutary warning against extortion and misgovernment in the future.

ferred grievous peril, then reaped a rich harvest in fresh annexations. The impulse to British advance came in the last years of the century. Sultan Tippoo, now ruler of Mysore in Hyder Ali's place, was already intriguing with Napoleon's emissaries, when, in 1798, there came out to Calcutta that great fighting Governor, the Marquis Wellesley, who, in the next few years' campaigning, more than trebled the total area of British occupation. First, he sent an army south to defeat Tippoo, broke up his dominions, and annexed the greater portion of Mysore. Next he turned north, and by diplomacy induced the Vizier of Oude to cede a large tract of country between the Ganges and the Jumna, as well as the fertile province of Rohilcund. Lastly, he turned to Central India and bearded the Mahrattas in their den. Scindia, their chieftain, had a formidable army, trained under the supervision of French officers. But the Marquis's younger brother, then known as Colonel Arthur Wellesley, but one day to be the Duke of Wellington, caught the Mahratta forces at Assaye and beat them utterly. The victory gave England the supremacy at Central India and a large portion of territory to boot. Thus, when the Marquis returned home in 1805, British dominions were almost continuous from north to south. When the Napoleonic wars were over, a new governor, the Marquis of Hastings, gave the Mahratta hordes their *coup de grâce*. Henceforward, such troubles as disturbed British rule came not from within the peninsula itself, but from the wild hill-tribes beyond the Himalayan frontier. Thus, after seventy years' fighting, the country was incontestably England's own, and India looked for its orders not, as in the old days, to the palace of the great Mogul in the ancient capital of Delhi, but to the "Government House," recently erected in the Englishmen's quarter at Calcutta.

CHAPTER XI

ENGLAND AT HOME

I

Georgian Aristocracy.—Soldiering and sailing are not by any means the only side of life; nor is history made exclusively on battle-fields; and, although great foreign wars had filled the middle of the eighteenth century and were again to disturb its latter end, yet, in the interval of comparative tranquillity between them, it is well to consider for a moment how England fared at home. The period, at first sight, appears devoid of interest or of character. Politics were as dull as they were dirty. Ministry followed Ministry without attempt at either novel legislation or beneficial change. A sort of lethargy or stupor seemed to possess men's minds; and after the stir and conflict of the preceding century progress came suddenly to a standstill. It was as though Cromwell and his followers had lived in vain. The young

flower of liberty, after a quick and too violent growth, had drooped and faded. The Royalist Restoration had come to nip its root, and democracy was paralysed at the very birth. Parliament, which had fought so hard to destroy tyranny, had itself become a tyrant; only now there were several hundred autocrats instead of one. England, truth to tell, had fallen, as in the old feudal times, under a narrow gang of selfish oligarchs. According as its so-called representatives at Westminster might call the tune, so the obsequious people danced; and how those "representatives" were chosen, we have already shown. The vast majority of citizens had no part nor lot in their election. The rare man who had a vote could easily be bought or bullied; and by fair means or foul the aristocracy had established a firm title to call the Government their own. Whether these gentlemen were Whigs or Tories made little difference now. The Whigs had originally been composed of business men and merchants; but, as the merchants became rich and business prospered, they bought themselves estates and settled down to the sedate and cautious habits of the landed gentleman. Such a class is naturally conservative by interest and tradition. It pays them to let a condition of affairs continue which, in the past, has suited them so well; and we can, therefore, hardly wonder that the eighteenth century stagnated and stood still. Few saw the need for change, and fewer still desired it. Ideals and consciences were put soundly to sleep, and men were too preoccupied with other things to care to wake them. Wealth and the growing influx of foreign luxury bade fair to ruin the English character itself.

Even religion was at a low ebb—the lowest perhaps since the Reformation. Parsons were content to preach their dry sermons of a Sunday and follow the hounds in the week; and the bishops were for the most part too self-satisfied to seek improvement. The general apathy is the more clearly revealed by the sudden and genuine enthusiasm which flared up in the Wesleyan movement. In 1739 John Wesley built his first chapel; and from that year on, with the aid of his brother Charles and his friend Whitfield, he carried on a series of triumphant campaigns of open-air preaching and widespread conversions. His success was greatest in the southwest notably among the miners of Cornwall; and, though he had his following even in fashionable society, the sect of Methodists, which he founded, drew mainly for support upon the shopkeeper or working class. He remained himself a member of the established church—but before his death he was ordaining ministers, and the movement was destined to become the strongest and the best organised of the Non-Conformist societies. Opposition to his work was nevertheless considerable. The fervour of his beliefs suited ill this common-sense age. His denunciations of a sinful world, his vehement calls of repentance, the suddenness of his "conversions" and the ecstacy of his hymn singings, all shocked a generation which looked askance at enthusiasm and mistook spirituality for hypocrisy. Religion which went beyond a code of decent ethics was scarcely considered good form.

Services and Privileges.—Yet we may easily fall into the error of painting the eighteenth century too black. A generation which has lived through three great wars and (what is more) has emerged from two, at least, with victory and credit, could not be wholly decadent or nerveless. It produced, no doubt, a Newcastle, a Bute, and a host of others like them; but Clive, Hawke, Chatham, and the men who followed them were also of its sons. Grapes do not grow on thorns nor figs on thistles. The aristocracy of Hanoverian times had many faults, and we have not sought to cloak them. Yet chief, perhaps, among these was their astounding ignorance that any faults existed. Look at the portrait of an eighteenth century magnate as Reynolds or Gainsborough has painted him. That smooth unwrinkled forehead seems to bespeak an honest heart and easy conscience. Yet we may be sure our man was guilty of many a dubious practice in his time; and, if under no necessity to handle bribes himself, he would not scruple to have given them. The rosy well-filled cheeks, bold chin, and handsome mouth are not the features of a debauchee;¹ yet we may wager that he took his pint of port as regular as clock-work and, on occasion, ended the festive evening underneath the table. If his habits of life were loose, he was clearly not ashamed of them: his self-satisfied expression tells as much. He wears, in short, the air of one who took his pleasures as they came; and, finding that fate showered on him an abundance of good things, accepted them as no more than his deserts, with great composure. His composure, truth to tell, was, in part at least, the secret of his strength. He never worried. If things went wrong with the Navy or the Army, he would work off his spleen in an outburst of abuse against the Minister in charge, then take a pinch of snuff and make a tour around his garden to count the peaches on the stable wall. It was the same in private life and in the management of his estate. No doubt it would pain him at times to see his poorer tenants half-crippled with rheumatics because their roofs were rotten and the rain came through. Perhaps it might even strike him that seven shillings weekly was not an adequate subsistence for a labourer's family. He may actually have wondered (though it is most unlikely) what he himself had done to earn the proud position of ordering these humbler folk about. Yet, supposing that he did, such thoughts were quickly banished; with the same serene composure he accepted fate's decree, and thanked his Maker that he, at any rate, was not as others were. Nevertheless, he was not a bad man, take him for all in all; and, according to his lights, he did his duty. His estates (and the peasantry who worked thereon) he managed with some sense of responsibility and pride, left them, as a rule, much better than he found them and (were he a man of enterprise) improved by sound experiments in scientific farming. He served the community as Justice of the Peace

¹ Portraits are an invaluable sidelight upon history. A remarkable difference may be noted between the anxious, even wistful faces of Cromwell or other seventeenth-century Puritans and the smug contented features of the eighteenth-century aristocrat. Even the bishops and divines of this epoch look more like prosperous grocers than men of deep religious feeling or true spiritual zeal.

and, perhaps, as Sheriff of his county. He assisted in administering the doles provided for the poor. He attended the Quarter Sessions, where he punished poachers and composed the quarrels of the local farmers. He saw to the up-keep of the high-roads; often he actually improved them (and much they needed it, being notoriously the worst in Western Europe). At his best he took the lead in a more progressive fashion and introduced important innovations; the Duke of Bridgewater, for instance, was a genuine pioneer in the construction of canals, and a great thirty-two mile waterway connecting Liverpool and Manchester still bears his name.

The English aristocrat, in short, was a despot, but an indispensable despot. In a hundred different ways the welfare of the parish and the county depended on his zeal and his discretion; and, on the whole, he did not often fail them. His duties, like his pleasures, he accepted with amiable composure, performing his tasks with cheerful energy and patient tact, smiling his way through life, and, when death took him in a green old age, receiving on his tomb-stone (where you may see it to this day) a fulsome catalogue of virtues, accomplishments, and graces which none doubted to be an unimpeachable certificate to Heaven. Nor need we question that the country hamlet over which he ruled supreme was in many ways a far happier, healthier, and more contented home than the grimy, insanitary, and overcrowded manufacturing cities to which since those days so many of the villagers have been transferred.

II

The Age of George III was (for the comfortable at least) a very pleasant age to live in. Then, if ever, the ruling class were happy and at ease. They had not many fears, few doubts, and no remorse. The anxieties and agonies of war scarcely touched their inner life. They took but little note whether colonies seceded or Irish peasants starved. Still less did they observe that in very England a thing was happening which would one day undermine their own position and disturb, past remedy, the even tenor of their ways. The long age of semi-feudal, old-fashioned agricultural life was passing. The age of steam, iron, and coal was coming into sight—the Industrial Revolution was at hand.

Mechanical Inventions.—Up till the middle of the eighteenth century manufacture, though naturally increasing step by step with trade, was still a very primitive affair. Most work was done by hand. All metal was forged, shirts sewn, and foot-wear stitched by the physical labour of blacksmiths, seamstresses, and cobblers. Machinery, of a sort, was used, of course, for looms and flour-mills and such-like simple processes; but driving-power, if it were needed, could as yet only be borrowed from wind or running water. Men's wits, however, were now busily at work to discover new and more serviceable devices. It was an age of experiment. Even in agriculture, the most conservative of all arts, new ideas were being tried. Large landowners made trial of all

sorts of schemes, artificial manures, the rotation of crops, and the scientific breeding of cattle, with the result that, not merely was the productivity of the soil very considerably increased, but also the quality of stock so much improved that an average beast at the end of the century weighed (so they say) just over twice as much as an average beast at the beginning. The experiments and inventions with which we are now concerned had, however, a very different issue; nor were they the work of influential and important persons.

Near Blackburn in Lancashire there lived a certain poor, unknown, ill-educated man, by name James Hargreave. Spinning was his trade; and the spinning-wheel then universally employed, by Hargreave no less than by everybody else, was worked by motions of the hand and foot. Above the wheel was fixed a wad of raw cotton, flax, or wool; and from this, when the wheel was set in motion, a simple mechanism drew out a fine-spun thread and wound it neatly round a horizontal reel or so-called "spindle." One day the spinning-wheel in Hargreave's house was accidentally upset. The wheel, however, continued to revolve on its side upon the floor, and the spindle, now standing upright, continued automatically to wind the thread. At this sight Hargreave was struck by a sudden inspiration. Why, he asked himself, should not *half-a-dozen spindles* thus be kept simultaneously in motion by the revolutions of a *single wheel*? He set to work at once and constructed, on this basis, a machine which he called the "spinning-jenny." In this a row of eight spindles, set upright side by side, were kept revolving by a wheel turned with a windlass. The result was a great triumph. Where one man previously could spin but a single thread, he was now able, by turning at the windlass, to spin eight. The invention was not popular with Hargreave's fellow-workmen, and, fearing the competition of this formidable rival, they broke up his machine. For all that, the discovery was bound to win its way. It had shown how the output of one individual's labour could be multiplied eight-fold. What limit could there be to such an increase? Given the necessary power to drive them, eighty, eight hundred, or eight thousand spindles might be kept at work mechanically winding thread. To find the driving-power was the next needful step.

Now, about the same time as Hargreave made his "jenny," a certain inventive young barber of Bolton, Richard Arkwright by name, was also conducting experiments on different lines. In 1769 he had hit on the idea of passing the spun thread through two pairs of close-pressed rollers, the second pair of which revolved so much more quickly than the first that they stretched out the thread like an elastic and drew it through more delicate and fine. At first he employed horses to supply the driving-power for his machine; but in 1771 he went one better and set up a water-wheel to serve this purpose. Nothing remained now but to combine the two inventions, and this was done by another Bolton man named Samuel Crompton. The rollers and the water-power he took from Arkwright's mill, the multiplication of the spindles from the Har-

greave "jenny." Putting them both together he constructed a machine which, spring as it did from a "cross" between two diverse parents, was nicknamed Crompton's "mule." The "mule" led quickly, of course, to an enormous increase of production; and little by little the invention was improved and perfected, until to-day as many as twelve thousand spindles can be kept simultaneously in motion with only a single human being there to mind them.

There remained, however, a second problem of a different sort. The "mule" might spin the thread, but how to weave it? Hand-loomes were, of course, half as old as time itself. (Did not Penelope work one in Ithaca while Ulysses was from home?) But weaving on these was at best a toilsome process. Three separate manual processes were at the very least involved. First, the shuttle, threaded with the woof, had to be passed from hand to hand between the outstretched warps; secondly, the woof tightly combed into position by a toothed rod or "reed"; thirdly, the position of the warps reversed by a treadle, and the passing of the shuttle then repeated. These three movements were simple enough in themselves, but, so long as they were performed by hand alone, the manufacture of cloth was necessarily slow.

In the early eighties, however, a certain clergyman of Leicestershire, the Reverend Edmund Cartwright, procured the services of the local blacksmith and the village carpenter, and had a model loom constructed in which these threefold movements were performed by mechanical means. Springs threw the shuttle from side to side and back again. The "reed" automatically descended, packed home the woof, and returned into its place, and finally a simple gear sufficed to interchange the position of the warps. Cartwright's loom, like Hargreave's jenny, was for a long time unpopular among the hand-weavers, and one factory he built at Manchester was burnt to the ground by these indignant rivals. The power-loom, however, was too productive an invention to be allowed to drop. It was soon brought nearer to perfection. The first clumsy model took two strong men to work it. But the motive power of water was presently employed, and, before the century was over, a new secret had been discovered, and a new force summoned into play the Steam-Engine.

Steam-Power and Locomotives.—The idea of using steam as motive power was, by now, no special novelty, but a satisfactory method of applying it had not as yet been found, and it remained a toy till the arrival of James Watt. Watt was a Scotsman, son of a Greenock merchant, and by reason of ill-health, from which he suffered, he turned to the making of geometrical instruments. Mechanics interested him; he kept his eyes wide open, and, if tradition speaks the truth, his first idea of the potentialities of steam was drawn from the observation of the behaviour of a kettle-lid. However that may be, he set to work upon experiments, and in 1764—three years later than the invention of the jenny—he produced a model steam-engine which worked. The practical employment of this new discovery was at first confined to

purely stationary functions, and was not applied to locomotion proper. Steam-driven pumps were first employed, and in time, as we have hinted, the steam-engine supplanted water-power for turning spinning-wheels and looms. The further step, however, was not long delayed, and before the end of the century a small paddle boat was plying at the speed of seven knots on a Dumfries-shire loch. Sea-going steamers followed a little later, and by the first year of Queen Victoria's reign, the screw had been invented and the Atlantic crossed. During the same interval the locomotive engine was also coming in. Small trains of trucks were run on rails at the pit-head of the mines; but not till the year 1829 was the idea of railroad transport on a larger scale put definitely into practice. In that year a competition was held between four rival engines, and in this the "Rocket" manufactured by George Stephenson, came out an easy winner. For the Rocket could travel at 35 miles an hour and pull a train of carriages along with it. In the following year a line was laid down connecting Liverpool and Manchester. Its practical utility was proved, and the triumph of the railway was secure.

In eighteenth-century days, however, of which we are now speaking, such wonderful developments were scarcely dreamt of. The time was not yet ripe. For all that industry was moving fast. The mechanical inventions for spinning and for weaving produced in England a deep and striking change. They gave an enormous impetus to trade and manufacture. The possibility of producing cloths and fabrics was increased a hundredfold. There were plenty of enterprising folk in England, who, seeing large profits to be got out of the business, hastened to install the necessary machines, and, more important still, there was now a ready market for the goods. Not merely did the growing and more prosperous population require the manufacture of more clothes at home, but the opening up of commerce with British tropical possessions led also to a new demand for cotton fabrics. Up till this time, wool had remained the popular material, and cotton was still regarded as a dangerous interloper, likely, if much encouraged, to supplant or cripple England's treasured home industry in wool. Till 1770, therefore, the authorities had frowned upon its importation, and to make a fabric more than half of cotton was actually prohibited by law. Now, however, the opportunity was too rich and dazzling to be for long refused. These hampering restrictions were gradually withdrawn. Hundreds of English cotton mills were started in the north, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century America was sending to England millions of pounds of cotton every year.

Coal and Iron.—Such a speeding up in one or two spheres of manufacture could not of course take place without a very profound effect on many others, and a few inventions, apparently so trivial in themselves, have availed to alter the whole character of English industry. The employment of steam-driven machinery, to start with, involved in itself two necessary things—iron to make the machinery and coal to

work it. Iron-mining and coal-mining were neither of them new. In the seventeenth century Newcastle coal could be procured at nineteen shillings a ton. Iron had been smelted with charcoal since at least the Middle Ages, and whole forests had been actually destroyed in providing fuel for this purpose. But the very inventions which called forth the need for coal and iron in greater quantities were also largely instrumental in making them, at the same time, more easily procurable. Watt's steam-engine was used for pumping water out of mines, as well as for hauling the material to the surface. New processes of smelting ore had lately been discovered, and soon great furnaces were discharging their streams of molten metal, fed by the fuel which engines manufactured from their product, helped to win. Thus a vast network of industries, each mutually dependent on the other, began to cover the surface of the land. The mechanical devices first used for making fabrics were applied to other forms of manufacture, of pins and nails, of cutlery and scissors, and all the thousand-and-one articles which are now in everyday requirement. England, hitherto in the main an agricultural country, was thereby led to convert her energies into a new direction. The change, of course, took time, but the change could scarcely have been more complete. In 1770 one quarter of England's total population were engaged upon the land. That proportion has now dwindled to one twenty-fifth, and the whole vast surplus of increased numbers has been diverted into the thriving centres of manufactures. The normal Englishman, in short, has ceased to be a ploughman or a shepherd. He has become a miner, engineer, or factory hand. That is the true meaning of the somewhat bewildering and perhaps misleading phrase, the "Industrial Revolution."

III

Domestic and Factory Systems.—Big changes, as we have said, take time, but the Industrial Revolution, as its name declares, brought about changes which, however gradual, were of enormous consequence in the history of the English people. Three in particular fall to be noted here. In the first place, it was to touch the personal habits of the labouring classes very nearly, altering the whole character and method of their work. Throughout mediæval times, and almost to the close of the seventeenth century, industry had been carried on almost entirely in small groups, a master gathering round him a band of craftsmen and apprentices who were all employed together in the friendly co-operation of a common workshop. There were no large factories, such as there are to-day, employing many hundred or many thousand hands. With the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, trade took, as we have seen, a big leap forward, and, as the demand for manufactured articles increased, and masters desired to get these articles produced upon a larger scale, a new system came into fashion. Instead of collecting his men into one central workshop, the employer preferred now

to distribute the materials and let the men take it away to work up into articles at home. Under this system he was able to employ perhaps hundreds of persons, where before he had only been able to employ a dozen—to employ, too, women and children as well as full-grown men. Whole families engaged upon the work in their own cottage; there would be a spinning-wheel perhaps for every member, or each would take a shift upon the household loom, and, when the tale of cloth or



FIG. 40.—EFFECTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION.

yarn had been completed, a collector would come round among the scattered villages and carry the manufactured goods away to the warehouse or the market. This home-work or "domestic" system, as it has come to be called, was increasingly common in the first half of the eighteenth century; it survived in many trades long after the Industrial Revolution had begun, and in some it lingers on even to this day. But it is obvious enough that, once machinery was introduced, the domestic system was no longer adequate. A power-loom could not be set up in every cottage, and, even were this possible, the distribution

of the fuel would be an incalculable labour. Since, therefore, the machinery could not go to the people, the people had to go to the machines, and the result of this necessity has been the factory, in which a hundred or maybe to-day a thousand men and women congregate, spending their long day in the manipulation of machines, and returning only at nightfall to their homes. Whether the Factory System is worse or better than the Domestic System we cannot here discuss; both have their faults, and the evil consequences of the factories at least still exist. More important to be noted here is the second result of the Industrial Revolution, which springs directly from the first.

Shifting of Population.—Now, just as the people were compelled to congregate at the new factories or work-centres, so it was equally inevitable that these new factories should themselves be concentrated in certain definite areas. Mines can only be dug where there is iron or coal to dig for. Machinery is more practicable to run where fuel can be easily supplied. The districts, therefore, which produced either coal or iron soon drew to themselves a new population of workers, and these folk, naturally desirous to live as near as might be to their work, crowded close together in their fresh quarters. As a result new towns sprang up like mushrooms, and very miserable unwholesome towns they mostly were, street after street and row after row of uniform jerry-built houses without beauty, comfort, cleanliness, or even adequate accommodation, groups of tall brick-built chimneys belching forth great columns of foul smoke, blast-furnaces roaring to the heavens and turning midnight into garish day, a country-side, soot-sodden, starved of greenery, an offence to God and an injury to man. It is not too much to say that the seeds of half England's modern problems—of housing, ill-health, and working-class unrest—were sown during these years. Slums are the second consequence of the Industrial Revolution.

So coal and iron then acted like a magnet. In days when no railways yet existed the difficulties of transport were almost unsurmountable, and even spinners and weavers were inevitably attracted to their neighbourhood. Now, as the map will show, the districts in which coal and iron are to be found and where the new towns, therefore, cluster thickest, lie mainly in the north and the northwest. The third consequence of the Industrial Revolution then was this: the population of England began to shift, not merely from the country to the towns, but from the south and east into the north and west. This was a change indeed. Hitherto, throughout the history of the nation, the North had been a backwater—desolate, thinly peopled, pastoral in the main, and invariably a hundred years behind the times. The North had been slow to accept the Reformation, as was shown by the Pilgrimage of Grace. It clung to the cause of the Stuarts till at Marston Moor the Parliament recovered it, and it remained still the chief stronghold of the landed aristocracy's prestige. The South, on the other hand, had always been progressive. London and the commercial towns of the Channel coast

had supported Simon de Montfort in his day, and so first raised the banner of liberty and justice. As time went on, towns had grown strong and numerous elsewhere, and the woollen industry had been established both in East Anglia, where exiled Flemings settled, and also round about the Cotswold country, where the largest sheep farms lay, and where many old-fashioned water-driven power-mills may, even now, be seen. Meanwhile in Lancashire and Yorkshire the foundations of industry were also laid, but as yet on a small scale. These various new craft-centres had carried on the free progressive spirit of the earlier towns-folk. Thus, as we have seen, there was strong backing in East Anglia for the Parliamentary cause. Allies too were found in Gloucester and in the few towns existing in the North. So things had stood till the Industrial Revolution came and shifted the balance once for all. The population was drawn into the North, and the South was left half-empty and wholly asleep. Consider many market-towns of south and central England, once famous and thriving in their day, which are now no more than picturesque survivals of those far forgotten times. The Industrial Revolution has cast a spell about them under which they have fallen asleep; their prosperous energy has subsided; their markets are empty; grass grows in their streets, weeds on their walls. What they once stood for—vigour, independence, liberty and progress—must now be sought elsewhere, in the noisy bustling, smoke-begrimed cities of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the northwest Midlands.

It is a common boast beyond the Mersey that what Lancashire is thinking to-day England will think to-morrow; and there is truth in it. The big towns now, as always, lead the way. So the results of the great change were not industrial merely, but political as well; and the so-called Revolution which brought them into being was paving the way also for other and more hazardous developments. For the independent spirit of the citizens of these great towns was sharpened and embittered by the miserable conditions under which they lived, and, whatever the rich and comfortable might think, they at least were not content to let things bide. The day of reckoning could not forever be postponed. It was not perhaps the aristocracy of England who had called the great towns into being; but the aristocracy were the self-appointed stewards of the State's welfare, and the time was soon to come when these sedate and self-satisfied gentry would be called to give account of their long stewardship, and when the hard-driven labourers of the towns would demand for themselves also a share in the government of England.

The movement towards Democracy was slow and painful. It was fully half-a-century before the first great advance was made, and the Reform Bill of 1832 extended to a far wider circle of the people a share in the election of its representatives. It is not perhaps until the present day that the working classes have awakened altogether to the nature of their power and begun to take the country's government more and more into their hands. Yet in history it is often the first steps which

count the most; and the first steps were really taken when Hargreave made his jenny and Watt's steam-engine was set up at a pit-head. The Industrial Revolution was the herald and forerunner of the great revolt whereby the working-class has won its rights, and triumphed over the strong forces of a lingering semi-feudal aristocracy. Happily for England, that revolt has been a gradual process—peaceful, constitutional, restrained, and (with but very few exceptions) marred neither by bloody conflict nor by reckless haste. Very different was the destiny of her near neighbour France. There the overthrow of feudal tyranny came not by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, but with the sudden noise and fury of a tempest, setting class against class in murderous death-grapple, and involving the rest of Europe in the awful conflagration of Napoleon's wars. That day was not now far distant; and, while England's own Industrial Revolution was still in its first infancy, the French Revolution burst forth a full-grown terror from the womb of startled Time.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLAND AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

I

Old and New Whigs.—Even the worst catastrophes may have their good effect; and the tragic blunder of George III's supremacy was not without its benefit. It at least taught the Whigs a salutary lesson. Seeing the power of the Crown once more predominant in English politics, and themselves driven out of office, they remembered in adversity the principles which they had forgotten in their prime. The fundamental idea of the great party's founders when they drove James II into exile and set William of Orange on the throne had been the subordination of the King to Parliament. A return to that old policy of 1689 was therefore not unnatural in the Whig enemies of George III; and we find them in 1780 putting forward the motion long remembered for its inimitable pertness, that the "Crown's influence has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." Nor was this all; for, along with the old Whig doctrine of resisting tyranny in all its forms, there was also revived the complementary doctrine of championing liberty in all its forms. Under a King like George such a championship was certainly most needed; and during the American controversy these "Old Whigs," as they called themselves, performed undoubted service in arguing the case for the colonials. When, however, it came to war, they spoiled it all by persisting in their factious opposition. Charles Fox,¹ their most masterly debater, made no secret of his hope that the colonists would win. Edmund Burke was little better; and

¹ See Plate XVIII, opp. page 396.

the whole party made themselves worse than ridiculous by adopting as their colours the "buff and blue" worn by the rebel army. The fact is that they badly overdid their part, and in their perpetual whine about the colonials' "liberties" and "rights" the Old Whigs were guilty not merely of some hypocrisy, but of personal spite into the bargain. There was a considerable flavour of "sour grapes" in their new attitude; and they were opposed to Lord North's policy much less because they were honestly convinced of its injustice than because they were out of office and he was in.

The crowning proof of their insincerity came in 1783, when, even before the Treaty of Versailles was signed, Fox actually struck up an alliance with his old arch-enemy and entered a Coalition government as the *colleague of Lord North*. From this, if from nothing else, it was manifest to all that the Old Whigs' regeneration was at best skin-deep. Notwithstanding much fine talk about their principles, their heart was as yet unchanged; and the canker of intrigue and party malice which had so long been their bane was their bane still. Happily, however, all Whigs were not "Old Whigs." There was another party, the followers of Chatham, who were of a different type. "New Whigs" they called themselves, and their most brilliant spokesman was now Chatham's son. William Pitt the younger was a mere boy of twenty-four when, in '83, the infamous Coalition between Fox and North was formed; but he was wise beyond his years, a great scholar in the Classics, a brilliant conversationalist, in politics and debate an infant prodigy—"not a chip of the old block, but the old block itself," as Burke admiringly remarked. But, more than all this, the one rooted determination which possessed the young man's mind was to have done with the accumulated filth of party politics and, if the power were ever his, to sweep it clean away. When, therefore, in the last days of '83 the King dismissed Fox and North in high displeasure, and offered the vacant ministry to William Pitt, the offer was accepted; and the task was then taken up which was not to be laid down till seventeen long years had passed away.

The Younger Pitt.—It would be rash to say that George liked Pitt much better than his father: he probably disliked him; but Fox, the only possible alternative, he certainly disliked much more, and he gladly kept Pitt in to keep Fox out. This fact gave Pitt his chance. He was a loyal enough minister to George, but he knew his own mind and his own strength too well to truckle to His Majesty's dictation. And, indeed, from '88 onwards His Majesty ceased to be in a position to dictate. In that year, a brain attack—the first of many—drove George for the time being off his head; and thenceforward Pitt suffered little interference from that quarter. More important therefore than his relations to the King were the young minister's relations to Parliament itself. As one who had supplanted them in the office which they coveted, he naturally met with the most bitter opposition from the "Old Whig" party. Their malice, however, overshot the mark; and

by their nagging tactics they brought more discredit to themselves than they did harm to Pitt. The country saw him to be a better man than his opponents, and backed him heartily, delighting to honour the son of their old favourite and the apostle of a cleaner public life. After a triumphant general election in '84, Pitt commanded a mixed majority, drawn from either side of the house, "New" Whigs and "King's Friend" Tories. Both sections learnt from their leader the lesson which neither had yet mastered, of reconciling the cause of English liberty and progress with allegiance to the King. His example taught them to set the country's interest above party claims; and, in contrast to the "Old" Whigs' unpatriotic agitations, their staunch defence of Crown and Constitution gave them eventually the reputation of being at heart a Tory government. Pitt's principles, upon the other hand, were first and foremost Whig, the genuine Whig principles, that is, and not the false.

Like every true seeker after liberty and progress, he stood for political reform, financial economy, and—so long as this was possible—for peace abroad. Reform lay perhaps nearest to his heart. Himself so wholesomely independent of all species of corruption, he desired to rescue political power from many corrupt agencies which gripped it. The old system of small country boroughs, controlled by the purse or influence of some great magnate, had become the more ridiculous and out of place since the growth of the new towns; and, in order to give to the masses a more generous share in the country's government, Pitt produced in '85 an important measure for redistributing the Parliamentary seats. But the time was not yet ripe. The forces opposed to such a change were still too strong and numerous, Pitt's Bill was quashed, and his ideal of political reform was not to take effect till nearly another half-century had passed. In finance he was more successful. The burden of debt, a result of the late wars, was overwhelming, and the annual revenues were positively less than the national expenses. Pitt saw, however, as Walpole had seen too, that high taxes, being an obstacle to trade, are not the only way, and not the best way, of increasing revenues. He therefore lowered the scale of duties upon various imports, until smuggling ceased to pay; and the result was that he was able to reduce the National Debt by ten millions in eight years; his annual budget began to show a surplus instead of a deficit; and the trade of the country boomed. Like Walpole in this too, though most unlike his father, Pitt was essentially a man of peace. It was only the accident of an unforeseen catastrophe which drove him against all his natural impulses to war, and to a war which killed him. He even shut his eyes, almost wilfully it seems, to the approaching danger, and on the very eve of the great struggle he declared, with an optimism which it is not easy to excuse, that "never had there been a time when Great Britain could more confidently look forward to fifteen years of peace."

For such lack of foresight, however, Pitt abundantly atoned by the

magnificent courage with which he faced the storm; and, when that storm fell, it was everything to England that a pilot of such valuable experience and such noble character was standing at the helm. For the French Revolution put England to the test, as nothing had ever tested her before. Apart from the peril of the war itself, the political upheaval which took place across the Channel found naturally an echo on England's shores. The example of democracy is contagious; and the minds of Englishmen of every class were deeply stirred, some by new aspirations, others by new fears. What might have happened if Lord North had been Prime Minister, or George the Third been sane, we can but guess; but at least there is no doubt that in its influence on England's political development—her ideals of democracy and liberty and progress—the French Revolution was “the most important event in English History;” and, since that is so, it will be worth while here to examine its sources and its course in considerable detail.

II

Causes of Revolution.—Nations, they say, always get the government that they deserve. But, if the political development of France had been somewhat slow and backward, it was not altogether perhaps the people's fault. Theirs was a big country, and its very size had been an obstacle to unity and progress; so that, long after England, a more compact and manageable kingdom, had been firmly knit together under the strong rule of a central monarchy, France had remained a loosely bound association of semi-independent feudal dukedoms. It was not, in fact, until the reign of Louis XI (when the Wars of the Roses were taking place in England) that France could properly be called one State. The growth of a true national feeling had in consequence been slow, and French kings had been able to play the tyrant with corresponding ease. So, whereas in England the Tudors had won their power by courting popular support and the Stuarts had lost theirs by despising it, Louis XIV had succeeded in combining the monarchical authority of a Tudor with the despotic methods of a Stuart. He and his successors were thus able to ride rough-shod over their subjects' feelings, to tax their pockets, to dictate their creed, and to scoff at all suggestion of constitutional compromise, until the day of reckoning came when their mistake would be discovered and—it would be too late. Much perhaps for the same reason, the French aristocracy had equally retained a full measure of all their old exclusiveness and feudal power. In money-making England the classes had intermingled; and it was easy now for a successful London merchant to become a peer. In France, on the other hand, the upper class were still to such a degree a separate caste, that an upstart bourgeois was scarcely admitted to the ranks of their society; and by a recent law men were even excluded from taking a commission in the army unless noble born.

As landlords, the nobles were at best indifferent and at worst cruel

task-masters, keeping a jealous grip over the tenants round their châteaux and exacting their feudal dues of rent and service, as in the bad old mediæval times. In short, the nobility held jealously aloof; and, as on the day of Crecy when the French knights rode down their archers like dirt under their feet, so now the rift continued between high and low, and with every year grew wider. France groaned under the burden of its antiquated system; yet scarcely an echo of the rising discontent reached to the gay palace at Versailles, where the giddy young Austrian bride of Louis Seize led on the reckless riot of wanton junketing at feast and gaming-table, masquerade and carnival, amid a host of powdered lords and painted ladies, polished in manner, exquisite in dress, but as utterly unmoved by their own country's troubles as the foreign queen herself. Thus between the aristocratic idlers of the *château* or the court, and the toiling multitudes of workshop, field, or counter, there was now fixed a gulf no longer to be bridged; and the result was that in the coming Revolution the townsfolk of the middle and the craftsmen or peasants of the lower class were to make common cause against the common foe.

In England it had been otherwise. The fourteenth-century peasants had struck their blow at feudal tyranny without much assistance from the towns; and two centuries later the townsfolk in their turn had fought and overthrown King Charles without much assistance from the rustic labourer. But the French Revolution proved to be, as it were, the Peasants' Rising and the Puritan Rebellion joined in one. Grievances long suppressed in town and country alike found here an equal outlet, and a class-bitterness fostered by many centuries of misrule, led on at last to frantic excesses of violence and revenge.

Revolutions, as Europe has been learning within recent years, are bred not in men's brains, but in their stomachs. It was the British blockade that dethroned the Kaiser Wilhelm; and Bolshevism was the product of starving Russian towns. Theorists, in fact, may agitate in vain among the prosperous and well-fed, and men feel little desire for self-government or the ballot box until their store-cupboard at home is empty. To this rule the French Revolution was no exception. Grinding taxation began it. Long and exhausting wars, waged to gratify a king's or a minister's ambition, had crowded thick and fast; the national treasury was empty; and the burden fell most unfairly, not on those who could afford it best, but on those rather who could not. In England it was the rich who paid the taxes; in France it was the poor. On the top of this came a series of bad harvests. Even the tough black bread, which was the staple food of France, ran short. Then the stomach spoke. Hungry men, and women too, took desperate courses; and the spell of the Crown's authority was snapped. Now came the theorist's chance. New-fangled talk of democracy was in everybody's mouth. The prophets of vague Socialism were numerous and loud. The gospel of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who had preached the equality and brotherhood of man, found millions of disciples; and the recent emancipation

of the United States was an object-lesson which even the most ignorant could read. The stage stood empty; the monarchy had been overthrown; the time was ripe for a grand experiment; and France embarked on the first great national adventure into the realm of pure Democracy. It was a brief flutter, a short-lived agony. Self-government is not by any means an easy art to learn. As always happens, the masses threatened to pass beyond control, and the demagogue, struggling to maintain a shaken influence by courting a spurious popularity, was compelled at the last to turn tyrant himself; and when he, too, failed, his place was taken by a military dictator, destined to carry France through an orgy of victory and bloodshed, to destroy for twenty years the peace of Europe, and to threaten the very liberties of the world. Strange things, indeed, are done by men in the sacred name of Freedom.

The National Assembly.—In the year 1789—it was on the fifth of May to be precise—there assembled at Versailles what we can best describe as the mediæval Parliament of France. The “States-General,” consisting of representatives from the Lords, the Clergy, and the Commons, was an institution long since established, and long since also disused. It had met in 1614 shortly before Richelieu’s day, but that had been its last appearance until now, when Louis XVI, frightened not a little by the rising tide of public disaffection, honestly desirous, though in no clear-sighted fashion, of introducing some reform, and anxious to rectify at any rate the more glaring injustices in the existing system of taxation, had determined to call it once again. Now in the States-General, as in the early English Parliaments, it was the established custom that each of the three estates of Clergy, Lords, and Commons should sit and deliberate apart. To the representatives of the Commons (whether peasants of the country or bourgeois of the towns) this was a sore handicap and grievance; for it thereby became impossible for them, though equal to the combined number of the Lords and Clergy, to make their true weight felt. When, therefore, the Assembly met in answer to the royal summons at Versailles, nothing would content the Commons’ representatives but that a joint session should be held. To this the nervous King demurred, raising legal objections and playing desperately for time. Impatient of delay, the Commons took the law into their own hands. On 17th June they met and declared that, whatever the King or his councillors might say, *they* were the “National Assembly.” At this bold action something near akin to terror seized the court, and when three days later the Commons’ representatives essayed to meet again, they were told that workmen were busy in the hall and admission was refused. Nearby, as it so happened, was an old-fashioned tennis-court, spacious, vacant and large enough for all. The Commons entered it; all stood; a motion was put; hands were raised in unanimous support, and it was there and then decreed that the Assembly should not separate until a proper constitution had been given to France. The thing was done. For a

thousand years France had been ruled by a king whom no law bound; and now six hundred elected deputies had undertaken to bind him. Dumb France had found a voice.

But a voice alone was powerless to remove the mountains of obstruction which still lay across the path of true reform. The King, poor honest simpleton, meant well. Necker, his minister of finance, was doing what he could to pacify the public rage; but, fearing to go too far, Louis lacked the courage to go far enough, and others less honest than he was held him back. Still some sort of compromise was not impossible; nor were even his opponents for running to extremes. Mirabeau, the great giant among their leaders, was no hot-headed revolutionary. He desired above all things to preserve her ancient monarchy for France. Moreover, he was heavily in debt, and it was whispered among his enemies that he was in royal pay. From him and from others like him there was much fine talk indeed; but, if talk was to be all, then the preliminary thunders of the National Assembly might very well have ended in a futile bray. For France, having found a voice, still needed an arm to strike.

Paris and the Peasants.—Meanwhile in Paris, not an hour's ride away, the doings at Versailles had been watched with grim suspense. The hot Gallic temper of the capital was dangerously explosive. There, socialists talked treason at street corners; hooligans needed but small encouragement to break the peace; and, still more ominous, a body of volunteers calling themselves the National Guard was being organised and drilled. Only a spark was now needed to fire the magazine. On the 11th of July, news came to Paris that Necker, the finance minister on whom the people's hopes were pinned, had been dismissed. Crowds began to gather. The armourers' shops were eagerly frequented. On the 14th, a store of guns and ammunition was looted from the great military dépôt of Les Invalides; and the next step was to follow the same afternoon. Now, dominating Paris and embodying, as it seemed to the inhabitants, a symbol of all that they most hated, there stood a fortress, immensely massive, seemingly impregnable, in which for centuries past had been imprisoned the unfortunate and often innocent victims of the royal displeasure—the Bastille. Thither the mob, now freshly armed, betook themselves. The Governor lowered the drawbridge; a party ventured across; some misunderstanding occurred; a musket was let off, and the party were shot down. Then Paris went mad. Somehow—though in what manner it is difficult to guess—an entry was obtained. The rabble swarmed in, forced open the dungeons and set free the seven prisoners whom they found there, massacred the garrison, and placing their heads on pikes marched with them in procession through the streets. The Bastille itself was levelled to the ground.

The news of this act of violence travelled like wildfire throughout France; and to the peasants it came as a signal to throw off the chains of their own oppressors. We should be wrong to think of the peasantry

of France as the most downtrodden among nations. Great as was their poverty and grinding as was their toil, they were by no means slaves; and compared with the German peasants of that day they were well off. But, as so often in the course of Labour movements, the more they won of independence and security, the more acutely conscious they had become of the cruel wrongs which still remained. Apart from unfair taxation, their aristocratic landlords held many of them closely in their grip. The hampering restraints of feudal custom galled them at every turn; and now, when they too came to strike their blow for freedom, their one ambition was at all costs to make a clean cut with the past. Many châteaux were looted. Some of the nobility suffered with their lives. But, wherever it was possible, the first aim of the peasants was to secure or to destroy the title deeds and other documents which gave the landlords any claim for rent or service over their tenants' plots. Like the Russian "moujiks" of the recent Revolution, all the French rustics cared for was to make the land thenceforward unconditionally their own. This done, they settled down again more or less contentedly, leaving the further course of the Revolution to the towns.

And, indeed, while such wild doings were in progress through the country-side, wilder scenes yet were passing between Paris and Versailles. The mob of the capital was very far from having quieted down; and, while their recent victory was inciting the men of Paris to fresh hopes and fresh exertions, hunger was gradually arousing a still more desperate element—the women. Shortage of bread, a result of failing crops, had long been troublesome in France. No serious remedy had been attempted. The blame was naturally, if unreasonably, laid at the door of the King's government; and the angry populace had been yet further embittered by such insults as the heartless taunt flung out of late by the reactionary Foulon: "Let the people eat grass," he had said, and the words were not forgotten. By the autumn of '89 the shortage in the capital had become acute. Long "queues" of hungry women were to be seen outside the baker's shops; murmurs grew, and even a trifling irritation was now enough to precipitate a fresh outbreak. On 5th October news came from Versailles that a drunken party of young royalist officers had insulted the emblem of the Revolution, the tricolour cockade. This was sufficient. A horde of frenzied women, wild-eyed, with hair streaming and cutlasses in hand, set out along the high-road to Versailles. The National Guards, under the command of La Fayette, soon followed them; and next morning they broke into the palace, cut down two sentries, and came within an ace of lynching Queen Marie Antoinette. Only one thing could pacify their fury—that the King should himself return to Paris at their head. So Louis went back to the ancient seat of his fathers. The Palace of the Tuileries was reopened to receive him; and there in the heart of Paris, its prisoner rather than its king, he remained a helpless puppet, unable any longer to control events. For Paris, partly in virtue of its possession of his

person, partly because it was the very hub and centre of the political life of France, became henceforth sole master of the situation.

The Revolution first and last was Paris' work. Paris was the arm which struck while the rest of France was faltering; and from Paris the smaller towns, scattered throughout the country, took their cue. Like most great cities, it contained two elements: first, the unlettered masses incapable of thought, the hooligans and roughs, and hungry women, with whom we may couple, though they were far more stable, the more disciplined shopkeepers and craftsmen who formed the National Guard; second, the educated men of the professions, attorneys, doctors, journalists, and what not—men who could read and think, make speeches and formulate a policy, and who were chiefly to be found in the two revolutionary societies or clubs named the Cordeliers and the Jacobins. Thus, while to the masses belonged the impetus or driving-power which was to carry the Revolution forward along its perilous path, it lay with these other men, as mouthpieces or leaders, to organise that impetus, to express in the language of their own political theories the inarticulate aspirations of the mob, and, when the popular frenzy threatened to sweep both them and the whole State to headlong ruin, to direct and to control it, if they could. Therein lay the hope for France—and the danger.

III

Reconstruction.—For just on three years after the King and Queen took up their quarters at the Tuileries, the work of rebuilding up France upon a new foundation was carried forward, if not smoothly, indeed, yet with much earnest and diligent endeavour. Recent events had simplified the task. The aristocrats of the court party had abandoned resistance or argument as hopeless and, seared by the violent course events were taking, had fled across the frontier or the Channel, thus removing the worse obstacle to a peaceful settlement, and leaving the National Assembly a clear field. That body, which had now moved to Paris with the King, was undertaking the reconstruction of New France upon very moderate lines. Much had already been done to remove the worst abuses of the old régime. Feudalism had vanished with the landlords' flight, and France had become (as she is still to-day) a country of small holders and peasant proprietors. The Church, a fellow-tyrant with the aristocracy, had been severely humbled; and the extensive property held by the bishops and religious houses had been confiscated to the State. The laws and law-courts were remodelled, and the whole country freshly organised upon a business-like system of "communes" and "departments." In short, before the National Assembly finally dissolved, its self-appointed task had been concluded. The way was prepared for a true constitutional government, with a strictly limited monarch at its head. Louis' position was not what once it had been; but it seemed at least secure. He was becoming even

popular in Paris, and might, had he been wise, have lived to govern France as King George was governing England. That chance he now refused.

Louis' Flight and Invasion.—Two influences, both of them external to himself, led him astray. In the first place, Marie Antoinette, his queen, who still exercised a fatal power over her husband's acts, was quite impenitent. She was the daughter of the great Maria Theresa, late Empress of Austria and Prussian Frederic's enemy. Her brother was even now seated on the Austrian throne, and, not unnaturally at this crisis of her fortune, Marie Antoinette turned to Vienna for aid. Secret missives passed; and soon a plot was hatched for her and her husband to quit Paris in disguise and escape across the frontier to their Austrian friends. A coach was secretly provided by loyal agents. Post-horses were arranged along the intended route, passports prepared under false names; and on 20th June, of 1791, the royal fugitives slipped out by the *Porte de Clichy* and made off in the direction of the German frontier. There was at once a hue and cry. The coach lagged unaccountably upon the road; and a post-master named Drouet, guessing instinctively the route which it had taken, got to horse, pursued, and at Varennes, within a few miles of the frontier, came up with it. The post-horses which should have been in readiness were not. That delay ruined all. Drouet gave the word to the town authorities; the coach was held up; the royal party were arrested, and ignominiously conducted back to what was now certainly their prison at the Tuileries. From the day of that fatal flight, Louis and his wife were no longer king and queen in the eyes of Paris, but criminals who had confessed themselves in league with the enemies of France.

And, indeed, the enemies of France were already moving. For the second influence, of which we spoke above, had been at work. The noble émigrés had been intriguing with foreign courts beyond the Rhine. Monarchs, seeing a fellow-monarch in peril of his life, needed no urging; and both Austria and Prussia were eager to crush the Revolution before worse came of it. In the spring of '92, the Revolutionary Government seeing invasion to be inevitable took time by the forelock and itself declared war. With that, the Revolution entered upon a new and more terrible phase. The restraining spirit of compromise and moderation was now dead. The royalist intrigues had killed it; and Paris broke out under the strain of the new crisis with frantic deeds of bloodshed and revenge. In August the mob forced its way into the Tuileries, fought and overwhelmed the King's foreign bodyguard of Swiss, and removed the royal couple to a prison-fortress known as the Temple Tower. Meanwhile, as the German armies entered upon French soil, precautions against treachery at home had been redoubled. All persons suspected of royalist sympathies were packed off into jail; and, in September, the precautions began to take a more violent and lawless shape. With the connivance, if not by the actual orders, of the Revolutionary leaders, a set of city roughs went round the jails, dragged

out the prisoners, and slaughtered them by hundreds in cold blood. Fear of the foreign enemy was setting passions loose, which, if not controlled by the leaders, would end, as we have said, by sweeping them too away.

With the September massacres, the three years of thorough and constructive progress ended. The next three years were a bewildering chaos of heroism and horror, fantastic dreams of an unrealised millennium alternating with the sterner realities of unutterable despair. In those three years two facts stand out, the grand national rally to the defence of France—and the Terror. On the 19th of September, the fate of the Revolution appeared already sealed. The Austrian and Prussian armies were marching towards the capital, and between them and their goal lay but Dumouriez, the revolutionary general, with a mixed demoralised force, hastily levied from the fields of France. On 20th September the two armies met at Valmy. The enemy led off with a terrific cannonade; but, for some reason which has never been explained, the charge that should have followed never came. The weather was drenching. There was much sickness in the German camp; and after a week of hesitation the enemy wheeled round and retired upon his tracks. France for the moment was saved, and the enthusiasm of that victory ran through the country like a thrill of returning life. Both within and without the number of her enemies increased. A counter-revolution was started by the royalist leaders, among the conservative peasants of La Vendée in the west. In 1793, a coalition of European powers was formed against her. Yet with each fresh menace the fighting spirit of the Gaul rose higher. Already, before Valmy, volunteers from the provinces had poured in. Six hundred enthusiasts had marched up from Marseilles, covering eighteen miles a day, and dragging field-pieces along with them; and the song they sang upon the route became the famous battle hymn of the new Republic. When volunteers were not enough, France fell back upon the remedy of conscription; and against the professional armies of her foes she pitted a new kind of soldier—the first truly national levy of modern times. Before the three years were out, she was fighting at more points than one on foreign soil. The period of “civil tumult” had ended. The war of conquest had begun.

The Convention and the Terror.—Meantime in Paris, still the factory of the Revolution, events had taken a strange turn. The National Assembly sat there no longer. Its successor, the Legislative Assembly, which had laid down the laws for the new order of affairs, and which witnessed the September massacres and the mob’s attack upon the Tuileries had also passed. On the very day of Valmy a third body had taken its place. It was called the “Convention.” The temper of this new government, as the crisis of the hour demanded, was resolute and fierce. Its chief leaders were the trio whose very names are still memories of fear—Danton, Marat, Robespierre; the first, a generous-hearted, loud-mouthed giant; the second, a hideous, half-crazy, yellow-

skinned dwarf; the third, an elegant dandy with cold eyes and a cold heart. It would be an absurd error to imagine that these three men were by nature uncivilised barbarians. As a young man seeking admission to the bar, Danton had delivered extempore and in the Latin tongue a speech on "the moral and political situations of the country in their relations with the administration of justice." Robespierre was a precise, if somewhat pedantic, student of the law; he had written several pamphlets of a philosophical sort, one arguing that capital punishment was undesirable. Marat was a journalist, with a jaundiced mind and a vitriolic pen. All three were for pushing the Revolution to the uttermost, and all three believed honestly and zealously that they were right. They belonged to the party called the "Mountain,"¹ which stood for the narrow supremacy of a *Parisian* Government, and to which was opposed in the Convention another and more liberal party called the "Girondists,"² pledged to support the interests of the Republic as a whole. Under the leadership of these three men, backed by their partisans the Paris mob, the extremist party of the "Mountain" gradually won control; and the history of their ascendancy is a continuous progress down the path of crime.

The Convention began its labours by abolishing the Monarchy and declaring a Republic. On 21st January of 1793 it executed the King (and in the autumn of that year the Queen). Maddened by the fear of treachery and invasion, it appointed in April a small body of nine persons possessing unlimited powers for trial or arrest, and known as the Committee of Public Safety. In June it turned upon the Girondist section of its members and committed their leaders to prison. Then the Terror began; and from this time on the cry for blood grew ever louder and more continuous till, swelling with a horrible crescendo, it finally plained as victims the very men who first let the foul passion loose. In July Marat was assassinated by a young girl called Charlotte Corday, who dreamed by his murder to deliver France and set free the Girondists; but she only succeeded in quickening the action of the guillotine. The Girondist leaders were the first victims of a bloody revenge. But the Tower was double-edged. In March of '94 Danton, who had begun to shrink back from such excesses, became suspect and was ordered to his death. During the summer months it became a simple massacre. Thousands upon thousands of suspected persons were packed into the jails. It was better, so they said, to kill some innocents than to allow any of the guilty to escape. The trials were a farce; and each day the tumbrils carried the condemned in batches at a time to the place of execution, where fiendish women sat to enjoy the spectacle and knit their husbands' socks.

Robespierre and the Directory.—Of this spirit, which we call the Terror, Robespierre was at once the master and the slave. Since the

¹ The name was an allusion to the elevated benches in the Assembly room on which this party sat.

² The Gironde, from which these deputies drew their name, is a district round Bordeaux.

death of his two confederates he alone directed the Convention's policy, and directed it along strange paths. His detached visionary mind looked away beyond these sordid necessities of method to the ideal conception of a perfect State, the creation of his brain. For him a new and golden era was about to begin on earth, a millennium planned by the logic of pure reason and perfect as a rule in algebra. All the hampering irrational traditions of the past were to be cut clean away. The very calendar was to be remodelled. The year itself was rechristened "First of the Republic." The week was abolished and the months renamed.¹ Christianity was discarded as an outworn superstition. The Church, which had shown itself too much a friend of the old order and too little of the new, was unceremoniously displaced. Instead of Christ was set up a new "Goddess of Reason," and a young lady was actually invited to impersonate that deity on the altar at Notre Dame.² All this midsummer madness was, in part, the fancy of the theorists who led, and, in part, a reflection of the crazy delirium of the mob that followed. Robespierre had not the will, or, if the will, no power to call halt now; and, just so long as the policy of anarchy and bloodshed chimed in with the temper of the crowd, so long and no longer could he hope to keep his place. He was like a horse galloping down hill with a waggon at his heels beyond control. Forward he must go; stop he dare not, lest he be crushed beneath the wheels. And, sure enough, the time was at hand when the passions which Robespierre had aroused would lay claim to his life too. In July of '94 he was shouted down in the Convention. He attempted to raise an insurrection in his own defence, was caught in the Hôtel de Ville, and there arrested, his jaw broken and mangled by a pistol-shot. Next day, as he passed through the streets upon the tumbril, his broken jaw bound up in filthy rags and jerking open at every motion of the cart, the mob, whose howlings he had so long encouraged and so long regarded as the basis of his power, now lined the pavements of the route and jeered him on to death.

But the fever had worked itself out. The Terror passed, as the worst of things must do. It had partly purged away the ugly passions which inspired it. By ruthless extermination it had destroyed very many of the old nobility. It left France henceforward a nation without an upper class. And, as the Convention made way for a new government provided for by the rules of the new constitution, the Revolution entered its last phase. Under the "Directory," as the new government was called, the lust for bloodshed vanished, but the spirit of military enterprise remained. Like Trotsky's Government in Russia, the Directory set out to win the world for their new social order. The message

¹ The new month names were adapted to the seasons in which they fell; thus, Nivôse (Snowy), Pluviôse (Rainy), and Ventôse (Windy), were the winter months; Germinal (the month of Budding) came in spring; Fructidor (the month of Fruit) in late summer.

² Not actually Robespierre's doing; he inaugurated the worship of the "Supreme Being."

of liberation was trumpeted forth to an astonished world, and democracy was to be carried to the oppressed peoples of the rest of Europe at the bayonet's point. Among the military commanders sent forth to this new crusade was a young officer who had already won distinction for himself in Paris by ordering his artillery to fire upon the mob and thus saving the Convention from destruction. Napoleon Bonaparte was the name of this young officer; and the brilliant victories he was about to win were presently to place him above the control of directories or laws. As the crusading zeal of French democracy changed to a lust for conquest and rapine, Napoleon, in whose genius were embodied all the perilous ambitions of this new and latest phase, mounted on the rising tide of popularity from General to Dictator, and from Dictator to Emperor of France. So the wheel was to come full circle; and the country that had killed the King who taxed her too severely thus delivered herself over to a more imperious master, who, for his own selfish purposes, was soon to bleed her white.

IV

England and the First Coalition.—Meanwhile in England the Revolution had been watched with an absorbing interest. Its earlier stages had aroused, even in serious thinkers, fantastic hopes for the betterment of the world; and, though many sad, old Tories shook their knowing heads, the more liberal-minded among Englishmen saluted the dawn of a new era in which tyranny should reign no more. Young poets, like Coleridge and Wordsworth, went into raptures and wrote ecstatic odes in praise of liberty. Wordsworth, eager to take part in the great enterprise, crossed over in person to Paris, where, needless to say, he underwent a rapid process of disillusionment. Politicians, too, were equally at fault. Whig champions of democracy waxed eloquent over the triumph of the people's cause, and compared it to their own historic but tamer Revolution in 1689. Fox grew quite lyrical over the fall of the Bastille—"how much the greatest event that has happened in the world and how much the best!" The young Pitt, though more restrained, was not by any means unfriendly. As a peace-lover, he had no desire to interfere. As Prime Minister, he regarded it as England's duty to stand by and watch events. Burke alone seems to have understood the dangers; and, though he spoke out in grave and anxious warning, none paid much heed.

Thus three years passed. Then came the September massacres of '92, the rise of the Convention, and, in January of '93, the execution of the King. From that moment English feeling was completely changed. The nation went into mourning; the theatres were closed; those who till lately had been loudest in their praises were now most vigorous in denouncing France. No adjectives were had enough for these inhuman monsters who had killed their King; and many seriously believed that the Jacobins were turning cannibals and drank their

victim's blood. Like the Bolsheviks of Russia, the Revolutionary Government were regarded as the subverters of law and order, destroyers of property, enemies of civilisation, traitors to the world. A fierce cry went up for war. That step, as we have seen, had already been taken both by Austria and by Prussia; and in February of '93, within a few weeks of Louis' execution, England joined their ranks. The threat to the Low Countries acted now, as in the later days of the Great War, as a stimulus to British zeal. As little could England afford to see Flanders fall to France in 1793 as to see it fall to Germany in 1914. So she prepared to do what was obviously to her political advantage under the more specious pretext of upholding a high moral principle. Holland, menaced equally by the revolutionists' advance into the Austrian Netherlands, grew nervous and followed suit; and Spain's adherence completed the First Coalition of European Powers.

Few campaigns have ever been more miserably bungled than the First Coalition's campaign against revolutionary France. There was no central plan. Each of the five allies attacked wherever and whenever appeared best in their own eyes; and in the summer of '93 there were no less than eight separate foreign armies on French soil. England sent one force to Brittany, a second to Flanders, a third to Toulon; nor did she make much better use of her opportunities at sea. True that in '94, on the "Glorious First of June," Lord Howe defeated the French fleet off Brest; but, even so, Brest itself was never properly blockaded. In the Mediterranean England first let her ships lie idle, and, when they might have been of use on the Italian coast, withdrew them altogether. All that she could boast was some small success among West Indian islands, where Pitt, thinking to make conquests on the model of his father, sent a large part of British forces, and where under the unhealthy conditions to be found there, enormous numbers were swept off by fever. It was a sorry show; and, had it not been for this absurd misuse and dissipation of the Allies' forces, France would not have had one chance in ten of surviving the attack. But that chance was given her, and she took it with a magnificent bravado. Whatever the crimes of her internal politics, her military spirit was beyond all praise. Carnot, the great organiser of the Republican conscription, was a man of immense genius; but he would have been helpless without the national genius of a fighting race to back him. Listen to the advice which was given the Convention: "Each of us has something to give. Let each be found at his post; let the young men fight; let the old men transport ammunition; let the women make tents, sew uniforms, or nurse the wounded; even the very children can make lint or fold a bandage." That was the spirit which the defence of France called forth. In the first levy of '93 three hundred thousand men were raised. Before the war was many years old the numbers had swelled to nearly a million and a half.¹ Ill-armed, in tattered

¹ It must not be thought, however, that the enthusiasm of these raw recruits was alone sufficient to carry them to victory. Without the staunchness and good

uniforms or none at all, often barefoot or with wooden sabots on their feet, these young lads, called up from the French farmsteads, flung themselves desperately, blindly, but with an almost religious faith in their good cause, against the trained professional ranks of their opponents. They shouted the "Marseillaise" as they went forward. They died with the name of France upon their lips; and not once nor twice, but many times, they conquered. Such a spirit was a new phenomenon in Europe, and there was no withstanding it. First Holland in '94, then Spain and Prussia in '95, made peace and called their battered armies off. Of all the Coalition Austria and England alone remained; and very soon Austria, too, was to confess defeat.

Napoleon Beats Austria.—For the year '96, the French Government planned to deal two blows at her in different quarters. One, a direct blow, delivered by the armies of the Rhine, failed dismally and left the Republic's military strength much shaken. The other blow was to be aimed at North Italy, where Milan was still Austria's property outright and the remaining states under her influence. The conduct of this southern campaign was given to Napoleon, and very wonderful use he made of his command. The army which he found dispirited and sullen he at once roused to warlike ardour by an unscrupulous promise of rich spoils. Then, starting in April, he first turned the barrier of the Western Alps and descended on the plain. By middle May he had stormed the Austrian positions at the Bridge of Lodi, and made his entry into Milan itself. In the beginning of the next year, he beat the enemy decisively at Rivoli, and drove them altogether off Italian soil, having won (as he told his troops) "fourteen pitched battles and seventy actions, taken a hundred thousand prisoners, five hundred field pieces, two thousand heavy cannon, and four pontoon-trains." Yet even this did not content him. He climbed the high passes of the Eastern Alps and marched against Vienna, until the Austrians, nervous for their capital, were compelled to sue for peace. Napoleon gave them peace, gave them, too, what for all his victories was in no sense his to give—for, with a cynical disregard of the professed French principles of liberty, he handed over the free state of Venice into Austria's keeping. Yet, from his own point of view the bargain paid. The rest of North Italy, formed into a new Republic, was no better than a puppet in French hands, and, more important still, Austria was out of the war. When Napoleon returned to Paris with the new treaty in his pocket amid the deafening plaudits of a doting populace, it was clear that there remained in Europe but two forces which still counted. One force was this extraordinary young man himself—not the strict, stout, martial figure of his later years—thin, wistful, sallow, poor-looking, ill-kept, yet with a piercing eye which seemed to range beyond the moment's tumult or applause to a dream that is only dreamt by mortal

discipline of the old regiments of Louis' regulars to stiffen them, these new levies would have been helpless, whether at Valmy or elsewhere. Even as things were, their morale was at the outset anything but perfect.

man once in a thousand years. It had been Alexander's dream, and Charlemagne's. It was to be Napoleon's now. And the other force was England, isolated indeed, without a friend, but nevertheless determined, whether with help or without it, to defeat the new-born aspirations of her age-long rival France. Between these two antagonists it was henceforward to be a duel to the death.

CHAPTER XIII

NAPOLEON IN THE EAST

Character of Napoleon.—Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Corsica in 1769. His family was of the nobility. His brothers and sisters were numerous and not without their parts; several of them, in the hey-day of his fortune, wore European crowns. At the early age of ten he was sent as a cadet to a French military academy—a good beginning for a future conqueror. But he was melancholy at school, won no great laurels, and at one time thought of absconding to join the British navy. Fate, however, decreed otherwise. His term of apprenticeship was duly finished and he entered the service of Louis XVI as a gunnery lieutenant. When the great upheaval came, he got home to Corsica, elected, despite his noble blood, to support the Revolution, aimed perhaps—though barely of age—at making himself dictator of the island, and, failing in this, fled. On rejoining the French army, he soon won considerable distinction by helping to recover Toulon from the British hands. After that his rise was swift. His manifest genius, his faculty for quick decision, his masterful determination to succeed at whatever cost, found an unrivalled field of action in these unsettled times. Something, too, in his nature—his dramatic touch in appealing to the emotion of the moment, his king-like habit of imperious self-assertion—touched a sympathetic chord in the French people. Having destroyed their monarch, they were yearning for a leader; sick to death of political muddlers, they demanded a man who could fight; and in Napoleon they found both.

No man ever held such mastery over a people's soul as he did; in a more superstitious age they would have worshipped him as a god. Over the men of his armies he exercised a peculiar fascination; they warmed under the caress of his eyes when they were tender, quailed in abject submission when they blazed in sudden wrath. At the magic of his presence they would march double; and renew a hopeless fight with a new ardour at the least signal from his hand. On his return from Elba he drew his veterans to him like a wizard with his pipe, and in the final agony of Waterloo, when the last hope had vanished, the wizard could still pipe them on to death without a murmur raised. Such willing sacrifice Napoleon took, accepting it as his right, without mercy, without gratitude. In Russia, when he saw the game was up, he left

his men to the Cossacks and the snows, and himself made home to safety; and once in his earlier years, they say, he ordered an infantry attack simply to show a lady friend what it was like. His devotion, in fact, was given wholly to a cause, and that cause, victory—not for his army, not for France, but for himself. In the council-chamber, as on the battlefield, he pursued no other object and acknowledged no wider claim or higher call. Religion and duty had no meaning for his mind. The ideals of Revolutionary France were nothing to him; and, as though to advertise his scorn of liberty, he was ready to enslave first Venice, then half Europe, and, had it been permitted him, the world. Moral principles he never recognised, when they stood across his path, as when in Palestine he slaughtered twelve hundred prisoners in cold blood, because he found them an encumbrance to his plans. For he held, as the Germans held in 1914, that necessity knows no law; and, as the Germans reaped, so equally reaped he. The conscience of mankind condemned Napoleon, not so much for the ambitions which he had, as for the ideals he had not; and there is one victory which the world will never permanently tolerate—the victory which robs it of its soul.

When Napoleon came back from Italy in 1797, the Revolutionary Government were not a little embarrassed at his presence. Throughout the campaign against Austria, he had acted almost entirely at his own discretion, and at times in blank defiance of their orders. It would never have done to have him acting so in Paris; and their most immediate concern was to find for this uncomfortable prodigy some occupation which would keep him out of mischief. A proposal was then on foot to invade England, and Napoleon was offered the command. But he would have none of it. An undertaking of such magnitude, and in such near proximity to Paris, would have put his reputation too decisively to the touch. He preferred to go farther afield; and the plan revolving in his brain, if more adventurous, had at least the merit of being sufficiently remote. The East attracted him, as it has attracted many another kindred spirit both before and since; and he proposed to strike at England by way of the Levant. Egypt, the Syrian coast, Asia Minor, and the Balkans, were all in Turkish hands; but to Napoleon the Turks seemed not too formidable a foe, and, once that barrier had been broken down, the road lay clear to India; the embarrassment to England would be obvious, and who knew what boundless empire might not yet attend a victorious excursion beyond Suez? So it was eastward that this second Alexander turned his steps. The secret of his plan was closely guarded, and, when in the spring of '98 he slipped out with the Toulon fleet and several hundred transports, there was not the slightest clue to his intention. First he pounced down on Malta, "the strongest place in Europe," so he said, and extremely useful to him as a halfway base. Having occupied the island and installed a garrison, he set his compass eastward once again and vanished.

Nelson Eluded.—England had, as usual, been caught napping; but there was some excuse. It had been a black year for her, full of

untoward incidents and menacing alarms. The infection of the Revolution had begun to spread. The seamen of her fleet had mutinied at Spithead and the Nore, hoisting the red flag and claiming to elect their own officers in "Soviet" fashion. The desertion of England's continental allies had left her in great peril, more especially since Spain had now taken sides with France. Her very shores had been threatened with invasion; and, in order to concentrate her vessels in home waters, the Mediterranean squadron, as we observed above, had been withdrawn. So it was not until Napoleon was on the very eve of his departure for the East that the British Government had scented the possibility of trouble in that quarter and had despatched a squadron of eleven ships to watch over Toulon.

The commander of this squadron bore a name which, though at that time hardly familiar to most Englishmen, is now famous throughout the world, Horatio Nelson. Nelson had served during the war of the American Rebellion. Of late he had been with Jervis, acting sentry over Spain, and barely twelve months before he had fought, and lost an arm, in Jervis's great victory off Cape St. Vincent. His experience, therefore, was manifold and varied; and what experience could not teach him a natural genius for seamanship supplied. But not even Nelson could work miracles. Thanks to tempestuous weather, he had to go to Toulon without his frigates; a fleet without frigates was like an army without scouts; and the fact that Napoleon escaped from harbour unobserved was due to no lack of vigilance on Nelson's part. Nor did he hesitate to act. Instinct told him to go east, and east he went, got news off Sicily that his quarry had passed Malta, and pressed on in hot pursuit. Somewhere between Sicily and Suez he ran through Napoleon's fleet on a dark night, and never knew it; reached Egypt only to find the harbours empty, and raced back to Sicily in despair. The disappointment and suspense were cruel; but after two months of ineffectual cruising Nelson had his reward. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the first day of August he discovered the French fleet, which had so long eluded him, lying snugly at anchor in Aboukir Bay.

Battle of the Nile.—To the enemy Nelson's appearance was a complete surprise. They had parties ashore at the moment, and, being in no way prepared for the attack, they met it riding at their moorings as they lay, stretched stem to stern in a long line across the bight. This was a serious blunder, and it gave Nelson his chance.

The tactics of sea warfare had not greatly changed since the time of the Armada. The vessels had improved; guns were more powerful and more numerous; but broadsides delivered at short range were still the chief method of attack, and boarding-parties were frequently employed to finish the foe off. One all-important lesson, however, Nelson had long since mastered, taking a leaf from Rodney's book. He endeavoured, whenever possible, to concentrate his fire on a single portion of the opposing fleet and to annihilate that portion, before the rest was able to engage. The immobility of the French ships, now lying before him

in the bay, gave a splendid opening for this particular manœuvre, and, though it was already well on in the afternoon when he first sighted them, he at once determined to close in and to concentrate the full force of his attack *on the head of the French line*. Half his ships accordingly manœuvred into position along the Frenchmen's seaward flank. The other half were to take them from the landward; but to gain this station was no easy matter. The French ships, as we have said, stretched well across the bay, and the head of their line was divided from the shore by only a narrow gap of shallow water. But his men knew Nelson's maxim that "where a French ship can swing, our ships can pass"; and, steering boldly for the gap, they cleared through and anchored, like their fellows, abreast of the French van. Then began a terrible bombardment. The French van, caught as it were, "between a pair of nut-



FIG. 41.—THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

crackers'' was raked by broadsides upon either flank. The ships had neither space nor enterprise to break moorings or manœuvre, and, while the rest of the line lay helpless and inactive in their rear, ship after ship succumbed under the blast and struck its colours. Night fell and the moon came up over a scene of awful grandeur. Smoke rolled in lurid clouds over the bay, lit by the conflagration of the burning hulks and broken ever and anon by the sharp spitting broadsides of the guns. As they mastered first one ship then another, the British crept forward down the line. Some they reduced to match-board and left them well-nigh sinking. In the flag-ship, near the centre, their shots found the magazine and sent the vessel skyward with a terrible explosion. It was hot work, and shortly after midnight a brief halt was called to give the gunners rest. When the bombardment was renewed, the enemy lost heart, and a general surrender followed. Of the whole fleet two ships alone escaped; thus, signally, did Nelson retrieve the unfortunate mis-

chance which had allowed the enemy to get to Egypt. But he had done more than this. He had recovered at a critical moment the British command of Mediterranean waters; and he had made it a moral certainty that Napoleon's army could never get back home.

In his heart of hearts Napoleon knew that he was beaten from the moment his fleet was lost. But it was characteristic of his genius that, if one plan should fail him, he would invariably fall back upon another; and he did so now. It had been, as we have said, his original intention, or at any rate his dream, to strike at India; and in India his agents were already busy preparing him the way. Lured on by specious promises of help, Tippoo Sahib, the native ruler of Mysore, had been persuaded to turn on his old enemies the British; and no sooner did he learn that Napoleon had reached Egypt than he hastened into premature revolt. His zeal was ill repaid. The forces dispatched by the British Governor-General, Marquis Wellesley, defeated him twice upon the field, drove him back into his capital, and killed him in the storming of the town—a brilliant feat of arms, in which no small part was played by the Marquis's younger brother, one day destined to become the Duke of Wellington and to win Waterloo. Tippoo's fate was the fate of many another who pinned his trust upon the Frenchman's word; for, long ere his Indian ally had paid the price of a misguided confidence, Napoleon had forgotten all about him. And, indeed, there were other problems far more pressing than the salvation of Mysore.

Sidney Smith at Acre.—All communication between France and Egypt had now been cut by sea. To advance was out of the question, to get home by no means easy. One route alone existed, viâ Syria, Asia Minor, and the Dardanelles, and that route was in Turkish hands. The Turks, however, presented to Napoleon's eye no serious obstacle. Already in Egypt their subject viceroys, called the Mamelukes, had crumpled easily before his arms; and in a battle fought beneath the Pyramids their Arab cavalry had been scattered like the dust. As his sanguine spirits recovered from the shock of Nelson's victory, Napoleon began to delude himself with a new hope, and to anticipate the conquest of the whole Turkish realm. Like the theatrical hypocrite he always was, he prepared the way by announcing his conversion to the Mohammedan religion, and, recalling the zeal with which revolutionary France had recently attacked the Christian faith, invited all true followers of Allah and the Prophet to accept him as their leader. The Turks, however, were neither so foolish nor so feeble as he fancied. They had now a British naval squadron to support them; and Bonaparte was very soon to meet his match. After a toilsome march across the desert, and northward up the coast of Palestine, he found the town of Acre, equipped with guns and garrison, across his path. Rather than leave a hostile post uncaptured in his rear, he turned aside to attack Acre, "a miserable fort" as he pronounced, and held, so he imagined, by a handful of mere Turks. In the offing, however, lay a small fleet of British ships, and in command of those ships a man, Sir Sidney Smith, who was

to "spoil Napoleon's destiny." When the French, half despising the task which lay before them, advanced to the attack, they found their batteries covered by the fire of the ship's guns. When their miners blew a gap in the town walls, they found British blue-jackets fighting alongside the Turkish soldiers at the breach. Assault after assault was flung back with heavy loss. Food was hard to come by in such a desert country, and the Frenchmen's store of ammunition ran so low that they were forced to collect the cannon balls fired by the British guns and use them in their own. Thus the place which Napoleon had counted on carrying in five days at most, held on for fifty; and on the fifty-first a great fleet of Turkish transports, with seven thousand troops on board, appeared on the horizon. As they approached, however, the wind dropped, and Napoleon, seeing them becalmed, spurred on his men to a last effort. This too was beaten back; and with an ill grace he accepted his defeat. He told the army that Acre was destroyed, and that the mere capture of its ruins would be a waste of precious lives. Then, destroying his siege batteries, he turned upon his tracks, and crept back sullen and despondent into Egypt.

Napoleon's one thought now was how he could himself get safely home to Paris. He had lately received dispatches (which by the tactful but not wholly disinterested courtesy of Sidney Smith had been allowed to pass) describing the plight of France in the most gloomy colours. This decided him. It was a big risk to take the sea with the British fleet on the watch; but there was no other way, and in the autumn of '99 Napoleon sailed from Egypt with two frigates, his expert mathematical advisers, and several members of his staff. The army, which was given no warning of his flight, he left marooned. It maintained itself upon the country till next year, when a British force came out under Abercromby to give it the *coup de grâce*. The French opposed his landing with a stout defence, fought twice, and were twice defeated near Alexandria, and finally, though opposed by much inferior numbers, surrendered to a man. Meanwhile, their truant leader had made good his passage of the sea, and landing on French soil had made straight for Paris. There once again a crisis was approaching. The people were tired of the Directory's misrule; and, instead of denouncing the man who had first led off their precious army on a wild goose chase, then come away and left the men behind, they greeted Napoleon's homecoming with manifest relief. The Government were in no mood, however, to surrender their power; for greater security they retired outside the capital to the palace of St. Cloud; and there through one long critical day they strove to uphold their waning authority, and to stamp Napoleon as a traitor. Towards evening, however, the soldiers came out upon his side. Bayonets were fixed; the deputies took fright, and jumping out of the windows scattered into the darkness. On the morrow, Napoleon was appointed First Consul of the State. He was now virtually Dictator, and under his leadership France turned with a new buoyancy of spirit to face the troubles that beset her.

Second Coalition's Collapse.—And, indeed, during Napoleon's absence in the East troubles had gathered round her thick and fast. Since the "First Coalition" of her enemies had broken up, Pitt had not rested in his efforts to revive it. Nelson's great victory in Egypt had given fresh hope and confidence to Europe; and now a "Second Coalition," not less powerful than the first, was threatening France. England, Austria, and Russia were all combined for her undoing. Austria had recovered her hold upon North Italy. Her armies were hammering at the gateways of the Rhine. The Revolution was once more in danger; the First Consul was appointed to save it; and save it he did with most alarming speed. In the early months of the new century he gathered his army and swept south. He crossed the Great St. Bernard, while the snows were thick, and descended upon the astonished Austrians in the Lombard plains. But he fell for once into the fatal error of underrating his opponents. At Marengo he was all but overwhelmed. His troops, however, though defeated in the morning, turned the tables in the afternoon and won so complete a triumph that it decided the campaign. Beaten soon afterwards upon the Rhine, Austria succumbed under the double blow. She made peace in the first months of 1801. The eccentric Tsar Paul of Russia, having changed his mind, was already a deserter from the cause. Thus the "Second Coalition" perished like the first; and once more England and Napoleon were face to face alone.

Armed Neutrality and Copenhagen.—Nothing perhaps so much distinguished Napoleon from the rank and file of ordinary generals as his statesmanship. He understood that even war is two parts politics, and that a campaign may often be less effective than diplomacy. His calculations were made not in armies, but in continents, and geography occupied his thoughts as well as guns. So it was natural that by now he had begun to understand with what kind of adversary he had to deal. He knew—and no man better—that England's strength lay on the seas, and that her position as an island rendered her immune from all normal methods of attack. But equally he perceived how that same insular position might be also turned to England's disadvantage. Trade was very life to her; trade filled the coffers which financed her armies; trade brought much of the material which supplied her fleet; and, if her trade were interrupted, England would be helpless, might even be brought to her knees without so much as a blow struck. Now, amongst the many countries on whom England then depended for her overseas supplies, not the least important were the States of North Europe and the Baltic coast—Denmark, Sweden, and Russia. These states had hitherto been well disposed, and, as neutrals, had been ready and eager to supply her needs. But, as neutrals, they were equally desirous to supply the needs of France, and this, of course, England could not tolerate. She had declared a blockade against all contraband, and neutrals were not a little inconvenienced by her interference with their sea-borne traffic and strict enforcement of the right of search. It was the same in 1800 as in 1914. The British naval power was viewed with much suspicion;

England's fleet's activities were bitterly resented; and this resentment Napoleon now proceeded to turn to his account. Fortune had placed in his hands, as it so happened, an extremely useful tool. The Tsar Paul, as we have said, had recently been converted to his side. He was a crazy fellow; Napoleon could twist him round his little finger, and it needed no great pressure to induce him to organise a league of offended neutrals against England. In this Armed Neutrality, as it was called, Russia was joined by the Prussians, Swedes, and Danes. All four claimed the right to carry contraband to France, and asserted their intention of convoying such material with their own men-of-war. Paul went still further and seized all British ships lying in Russian ports. It was clear that, even if it did not come to war, England could count no longer on her North Sea trade.

Here was a challenge to England which no decent government could overlook. It was as though in the late war the United States had sent

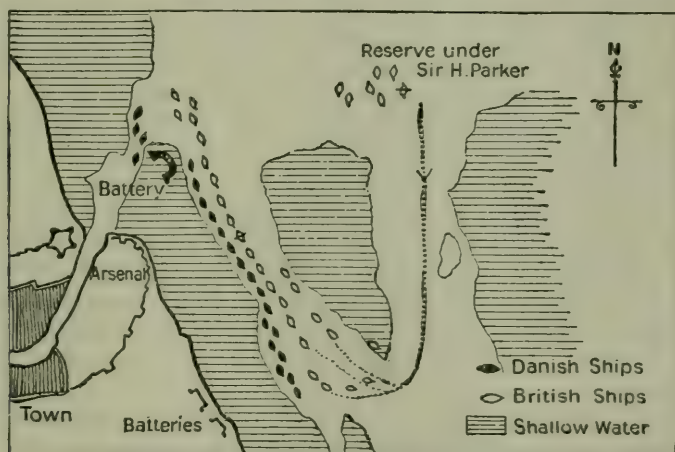


FIG. 42.—THE BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN.

the *Lusitania* with a destroyer at her side to carry guns to Kiel. Pitt acted promptly. Without officially declaring war, he dispatched a fleet to the Baltic under Admiral Hyde Parker with Nelson as second in command. Parker was elderly and nervous. He was afraid of "ice-packs" and "dark nights" at sea, and it was well that Nelson was there "to brace him up." The fleet made for Copenhagen, the Danish capital, and demanded an instant withdrawal from the League; and the demand was refused. There was a powerful Danish fleet in Copenhagen. The town forts were heavily gunned. The approach through the mud banks was extremely intricate and dangerous. None but Nelson would have had the courage to attempt an entry. Sir Hyde Parker certainly had not, but, after a long tussle, Nelson had his way, and the fleet was ordered to attack. As Nelson went up through the channel, three of his largest vessels ran aground, and when he closed in upon the Danes

it was with an actual inferiority of numbers. The advantage of position too lay with the enemy. Their ships, like those of the French at Aboukir, were drawn up at anchor, stretched in a long line before the town and close inshore. The fire of their fixed batteries commanded the approaches to the harbour, and protected the ships' line on either flank, while fresh supplies and reinforcements were waiting on the foreshore to be ferried out whenever need arose. Such odds were enough to make even a Nelson quail, as he laid his ships alongside the enemy. Three solid hours of cannonading followed, and the prospects still appeared as black as ever. The British ships had suffered seriously, and as yet not a single Danish ship had struck its colours. Sir Hyde Parker, who was lying in the offing with a reserve of eight fine vessels, began to fidget and show signs of nerves. At last he could bear the responsibility no longer and ran up the famous signal, No. 39—the order to cease action. Nelson made up his mind in a moment. He determined to disobey and, putting his glass to his blind eye, humorously remarked that he could not see the signal. Then he turned to resume the action with redoubled energy. By two o'clock the worst was over. The Danish fire was slackening, but, though many of their ships had yielded, the land batteries were as vigorous as ever. Nelson, with more bluff perhaps than generosity, offered the enemy truce, and the offer was accepted. The Danes had been read their lesson, and the British fleet turned east to deal with Russia. There, however, events had meanwhile moved more rapidly than even the British fleet. The old Tsar Paul, Napoleon's crazy friend, had met his death by an assassin's hand. His successor, who had no stomach for continuing the quarrel, lost no time in making his peace with England. There was no need for a second Copenhagen, and without any further trouble on England's part the "Armed Neutrality" melted away.

Napoleon stamped with rage when the news of these developments reached him, but, for the time being, at least, he recognised that he was done. France was sorely in need of rest. After ten years of constant fighting it was well to think of peace, and negotiations were accordingly begun. In the subsequent *pourparlers* Napoleon fooled British diplomats at every turn. Pitt was out of office at last, and, though he approved of peace, the peace his successors made was not after his fashion. England allowed the French to retain the whole country west of the Rhine. She recognised the new Republic in North Italy and (what touched her far more closely) the similar Republic, formed also under the auspices of France, in the Dutch and Belgian Netherlands. In return England got nothing but promises in plenty—promises which Napoleon never meant to keep. Nevertheless, when the Treaty of Amiens was concluded in the March of 1802, it was by no means unwelcome on England's side the Channel. Englishmen too were weary, and the respite came none too soon. "It was a peace," they said, "of which every one was glad, but no one proud"; yet little enough did it matter what sort of peace this was, for it lasted precisely twelve months.

CHAPTER XIV

THE YOUNGER PITT AND THE "UNION OF IRELAND"

I

If the ten years which preceded the Peace of Amiens gave England but a foretaste of what was presently to follow, they were nevertheless a time of heavy stress and deep anxiety. As the months passed and ally after ally left England's side, the burden laid upon her shoulders grew to be almost more than she could bear. The rapid and incalculable strokes of Napoleon's strategy set nerves on edge. British ministers' resources were strained to breaking-point; and the young Pitt was now no longer young. Slowly but surely the war was killing him. True that, much as he hated it, he faced the conflict with a courage worthy of that great fighting man his father. His sanguine temperament was confident of victory; and, just as before he had wilfully closed his eyes to the approaching trouble, so now he doggedly refused to entertain the least suspicion of defeat. He was constantly predicting the collapse of France within the next twelve months; nor did he leave a stone unturned to facilitate her surrender. Not once, but many times, he offered terms of peace, terms which, however, showed neither irresolution, arrogance, nor weakness. There is little wonder that the English nation at large soon recognised in Pitt the mainstay of its hopes; or that he was given as free a hand as any man could wish. In the House he was regarded as an oracle; the Cabinet itself he ruled with a rod of iron, sweeping his colleagues along with him whenever they shrank from action, and stamping every measure with the impress of his own strong personality. From a military point of view it is perhaps too much to say that Pitt was a success. He had little of his father's breadth of vision. He allowed, as we have seen, too much dissipation of British forces, and he never seems to have had a clear conception of the aim and purpose of England's policy on land. Indeed, as in many previous wars upon the continent, she left most of the actual fighting to be done by others, and contented herself with affording them financial aid. In this Pitt never erred towards small-minded economy. Vast sums went out from Britain during these years. Loans running into millions went to Austria. Subsidies were doled out with a lavish hand to Prussia, Hanover, Sardinia, Portugal, and half a dozen of the smaller German States. Before he had finished, Pitt had added three hundred million pounds to the British public debt. The drain on England's resources was without precedent, and the national credit sank so low that a hundred-pound share in Consols, the Government stock, was at one time quoted at £47. Pitt borrowed, and borrowed, and borrowed again, till many declared he was ruining the country. Yet there was no alternative. It was impossible to squeeze more money from the taxes. In '96 he trebled many of the

rates. In '98 he introduced for the first time a tax on incomes, which took a small proportion from all over £60, and two shillings in the pound from all over £200. Yet, if Pitt's method of finance was bad, it lay with his critics to suggest a better; at any rate he won through. England's staying-power was never more triumphantly displayed than under his leadership. Failure by land was more than counterbalanced by victory at sea; and it was not without good reason that Pitt earned the famous title of "the Pilot who weathered the Storm."

Pitt's Home Policy.—Nor was the foreign danger the only problem which Pitt was called to face. England could scarcely pass through this anxious period of unsettlement without alarms at home. The ferment of revolution was brewing secretly among the more restless portions of the population. Malecontents in town and countryside pointed eagerly to the example set by France—of tyranny vanquished, property redi-vided, and aristocratic privilege unthroned. Agitators were busy; propaganda was entering from abroad; there were mutinies in the fleet; and even darker conspiracies were hinted at. In 1792 a store of formidable daggers was discovered in Birmingham and Burke displayed a specimen to the startled House of Commons. The authorities took fright; and recourse was had to stern measures of suppression. Comparatively harmless speakers and lecturers were tried, though not convicted, for High Treason. An "Aliens' Act" was passed for the arrest of dangerous foreigners. Writers of questionable pamphlets were transported overseas. The "Habeas Corpus Act," which forbade imprisonment on mere suspicion, was for the time suspended. Finally, a Bill was brought in prohibiting all meetings or assemblies of over fifty persons without the express permission of a magistrate. Never since Stuart times had the liberty of Englishmen been so seriously curtailed. But the most famous and important of all Pitt's measures of coercion dealt not with the home country, but with Ireland. The "Act of Union" which brought that country under direct control of the English Parliament, and thus sowed the seed of such unending trouble for future generations, was perhaps the inevitable sequel to much that had gone before. Provocation in plenty there had doubtless been; but there had been misrule as well. Pitt reaped the harvest of his predecessors' folly; and he merely handed on the legacy of evil which he himself received. Nevertheless, the "Union" of 1800 was Pitt's work—strange work for an old Whig champion of freedom and reform; and, during the brief respite from the tale of war which the Peace of Amiens gives England, it will be well to give some account not merely of Pitt's policy itself, but also of the events which, during the previous century, had brought the distressful island to this most unwelcome pass.

II

Condition of Ireland.—Before attempting to describe in detail the circumstances which led to the ill-fated Union, it is important to remind

ourselves of certain outstanding aspects of the Anglo-Irish problem. It is necessary, in the first place, to remember that in Ireland two elements existed, differing one from the other in race, history, and tradition, and irreconcilably opposed. On the one hand there were the alien settlers, whether Englishmen or Scots, who had from time to time been granted lands in Ireland by William III, Cromwell, James, and Elizabeth, and in whose hands more than three-quarters of the island is now vested. On the other hand there were the natives of the country, whom it had been the deliberate object of this policy to dispossess, and who now for the most part could cultivate the land only as tenants and at the price of heavy rents. The settlers, who numbered but a third or less of the whole population, were most strong and numerous in the northern province of Ulster; but in the other provinces the local peasantry were still equally subjected to these alien landlords, who cared little or nothing for the country, and often did not even reside on their estates. Next, we must note that this serious racial cleavage was the more intensified by an old religious feud. For whereas the settlers were Protestants by extraction, the natives were Catholic to a man. Even in England the feeling against Popery still ran so high that Catholics were spitefully excluded from entering public life; and, as was only natural, the feeling over in Ireland was a hundredfold more strong. Nor were any limits set to men's hatred and distrust. It was the accepted maxim that the only method with an Irish Catholic was to treat him like a beast; and it was barely above a century since the capture of a Jesuit had been bracketed with the slaying of a wolf as worth a ten-pound prize from Government. In the third place, we must observe that England's commercial policy towards Ireland was precisely on all fours with her attitude towards the colonies at large. She valued Ireland less indeed than British overseas possessions, because there was less advantage to be sucked from her. On the other hand, England interfered with Ireland's industries far more, because there was far more danger of their competing with her own. Hence she made no pretence whatever to frame her legislation for the island's benefit; and the sufferings inflicted by this selfish policy on both settlers and inhabitants alike were regarded on the English side the Irish Channel with absolute indifference. In this England was no better and no worse than other nations of the world. Hers was simply the normal attitude of a strong nation towards its weak dependencies during the eighteenth century.

Lastly, we must not omit from our consideration the peculiar Celtic temperament of Irishmen. The average peasant, it is true, was too illiterate, too miserable, and too degraded to form any clear conception of his country's wrongs. The most he would do was to break out at intervals into wild and often barbarous excesses; he had massacred the Protestants with singular brutality in 1641, and he was still capable, as we shall see, of committing midnight outrages on unsuspecting persons or maiming the innocent cattle of his enemies. In the more cultivated minds, however, that were now to undertake the uphill task of

championing their helpless countrymen, there was all the high ardour and imaginative force which the Celt has ever thrown into a forlorn and failing cause. The Irish national leaders could then, as they can to-day, work up both in themselves and in their followers a fierce and at times exaggerated sense of their country's grievances. They possessed the art of words and could fire the imagination with a phrase; and, if they deluded their own countrymen with empty hopes, they could no less delude England by false fears. In short, the Irish character has changed but little in a hundred years. It is but a step from the tragic insurrection which failed at Vinegar Hill to the Dublin street fighting of 1916; and the spirit of Edward Fitzgerald and Wolfe Tone lived on to later days in de Valera and Sinn Fein.

Ireland was governed by a Viceroy sent out direct from England and quartered in Dublin Castle with a large, often indolent, and always unsympathetic staff. Like Scotland, however, in the days before the Union, Ireland possessed a Parliament of her own, chosen from time to time by regular election, and entrusted with the making of the local laws. This privilege, to all appearances so generous, was in reality a mere shadow and a fraud. In the first place, the resolutions of the Irish Parliament could be overruled at any time from Westminster, and, without the sanction of the British Government, possessed no binding force. Worse still, since the time of George I at any rate, England had claimed the power to impose what laws she fancied upon Ireland, and against these the Irish Parliament had no redress. In the second place, the privilege of local power, for what that privilege was worth, was concentrated wholly in the hands of Protestants. No Catholic might sit at Dublin as a member; no Catholic might hold public office even of the most humble sort; and, above all, no Catholic might possess a vote. Thus by a system as little democratic as a system well could be, the scales of law and justice were doubly weighted against the native element of the inhabitants; and it will be no great matter for surprise that throughout the eighteenth century the interests of the vast majority of Irishmen went wholly to the wall.

Penal and Commercial Codes.—The attack upon the liberties of Catholics began soon after the battle of the Boyne. Though he refrained in England from punishing the supporters of King James, William III was less tender in his dealings with his Irish foes. A savage set of laws were passed which were known as the Penal Code, and to which successive governments kept adding, till it became impossible for Irish Catholics to raise their heads at all. As a result no Catholic was allowed to take a commission in the army, to become a lawyer or a doctor, to keep a school, or even attend a university. He might not purchase land. If he took a Protestant woman as his wife, her land might not be his. He might not go on pilgrimage to holy places; he might not buy a gun to shoot a rabbit; and, if by any chance he owned a horse, its value might on no account exceed five pounds. These laws were aimed, as may easily be seen, at the folk of the upper class. The Catholic gentry

were first to be discredited, and, if all went well with the Protestants' design, they would eventually perhaps have disappeared. But such savage measures defeated their own ends. Juries could not be found to pass verdicts on offenders. The preposterous Penal Code became a dead letter, and the attempt to enforce it strictly was abandoned. To the lower classes of Ireland it had never made much odds. Their miseries were due to legislation of another sort, which we may call the Commercial Code, and which proceeded from jealousies of trade, not creed. The laws of this code, designed as they were to protect the English market at the Irishman's expense, hit every class in Ireland equally; from them, settler and native, labourer and farmer, Protestant and Catholic, all suffered in a lump.

Nature had intended Ireland to be one of the richest pastoral countries in the world. Sheep, pigs, and cattle could be raised in immense numbers; all were of excellent quality; and at one time meat, cheese, bacon, wool (raw or manufactured) were exported in abundance. The English farmers, however, had been quick to scent a rival and to grudge the neighbouring island her prosperity. So, in the reign of Charles II, a stringent law was passed forbidding all animals, alive or dead, to leave an Irish port. Soon butter and cheese were likewise laid under the ban. William III had done the same for wool, and George I for cotton. Only the Ulster flax trade, which had no competitors in England, was suffered to survive. By these cruel measures Ireland's future destiny was fixed. Trade might have brought her wealth and a share in the world's good things; but, being deprived of a market for her produce, she naturally abandoned the attempt. The sheep farms went to pieces, manufactures ceased, and all enterprise was stifled at its birth. The country folk fell back on growing just such produce as would satisfy their own domestic needs; and an unkindly fate supplied them with what at first appeared a blessing, but what proved eventually a curse—the common potato. Potato crops are easily grown and normally prolific, but they are also much subject to disease and apt to fail completely. The result was that Ireland lived under the perpetual fear of famine, and only too often she actually succumbed. Her population thus hovered on the uncertain margin between plenty and starvation. Hard work was at a discount, since the crops depended mainly on the weather. Their habits grew indolent and listless. Lacking all spur to enterprise, they accepted with a sort of fatalistic stupor the degraded life they were compelled to live. Their cottages fell to pieces; the clothes went to tatters on their back; the children grew up ignorant and idle as their fathers. They retained, indeed, their peculiar Celtic passion for romance, their poetical belief in ghosts, banshees, and fairies, their superstitious reverence for the priest, and deep down—now almost crushed beneath the burden of their troubles—the craving that Ireland might once again be free. But they lived the life of pigs; and even the worst paid labourer in England was prosperous by comparison with them.

III

America and Irish Nationalism.—Thus, in 1761, when George III came to ascend the throne of England, Ireland was still suffering under the curse of a twofold tyranny. While the Dublin Parliament was venting its Protestant spite on the great majority of Irishmen, the London Parliament was exercising its commercial jealousy against Ireland as a whole; and such nominal Home Rule as the Dependency enjoyed was either overridden or misused. Then occurred two great events, both external to Ireland, but both of profound significance to her development. One was the American Rebellion, the other the Revolution in France. Each in its turn let in a ray of hope on Irish darkness. The sight of their colonial cousins triumphing over the tyrannical mother-country awoke in Irish patriots a desire to follow the bold example. Leaders came out into the open. The spirit of the country found articulate expression. Deeds followed words: in 1782 a full measure of Home Rule was granted; Ireland was given her head to make what laws she willed, and heal her troubles as she chose. For a while the day of her deliverance appeared to have arrived; but the fatal disunion, so long and so deeply rooted in her history, still remained. Landlords were still selfish, peasants were still miserable and poor, and from this clash of interests a bitter antagonism was born. To allay this spirit of faction was beyond the power of the Dublin Parliament. It first lacked support, then lost authority. Home Rule became a farce, which ended in a tragedy, and in 1800 it was unconditionally withdrawn. The Union took its place.

The story must now be told in greater detail. It was in 1774 that the war with the American Colonies began, raising among the Irish, as we have said, new aspirations and new hopes. In 1778 came the alliance of France with England's colonial enemy, setting an additional strain on her naval and military resources and threatening her with the imminent prospect of invasion. It was a critical moment. Ireland had been emptied of troops; her normal garrison had been sent overseas; and a French descent on the undefended island was expected almost hourly. The Irish have a gift for doing the unexpected. Instead of welcoming the enemy as a saviour (which is what many Irishmen would do to-day), they undertook to raise a volunteer contingent for the protection of their shores. The movement began among the Irish Protestants; but, once started, it soon spread. Thousands upon thousands were enrolled and drilled. Every class from peer to peasant was represented in their ranks; and in the enthusiasm of the moment arms were furnished them by England. The volunteer army was never used against the French, for the simple reason that the French never came; but it was soon discovered to have another use. Its guns had hitherto been trained against the enemy; but they could equally be trained against the English.

What the American colonies had done, Ireland could do too. The

mere threat of such an action, coming as it did at the crisis of the war, was enough to make Lord North's blood run cold. He did not yield at once to the full extent of their demands, but he nervously began to give some ground, and step by step the emancipation of Ireland was secured. In 1778 the restrictions upon trade were partially removed. In 1780 they were altogether abolished. The Irish Parliament, now conscious of its strength, kept up the pressure, and in 1782, as we have said, it won a very liberal measure of Home Rule. Laws were to be made from Dublin in the future, not from Westminster. Judges were no longer to be appointed by the Crown. Even Ireland's army was henceforth to be in some degree her own. Loyalty, in fact, had proved a paying game; and by her exemplary behaviour (combined with judicious threats) Ireland had secured what open treason never could have won her. The hero of this astute, but honourable policy, was Henry Grattan, the leader and chief spokesman of the Irish House. Grattan was in many ways typical of his country. He was a born orator, and, even in an age of powerful speakers, few could touch him. Words flowed from his quick brain like a torrent, and in the violence of his gestures he would almost sweep the ground. Yet Grattan was no mere demagogue. He possessed a statesman's mind, capable of regarding Ireland's welfare as a whole and utterly free from narrow party spite. He saw that if Home Rule was to prosper it must be real Home Rule—self-government by Catholics no less than Protestants, natives no less than settlers, peasants no less than squires. His was a noble and far-sighted vision; and upon his powers of translating it into fact the future of the great experiment depended. Men believed in Grattan, and Ireland entered the new era with high hopes. Trade at once revived. Broken industries were resumed. Grain and dairy produce were again exported. Dublin, waking as from a sleep, soon hummed with prosperous life, and all seemed well.

Grattan's Home Rule Parliament.—Yet all proved but a passing dream. Grattan's policy of liberal-minded but constitutional advance was foredoomed to utter failure, and two obstacles sufficed to overthrow it. One was that old stumbling-block to liberty, the personal prejudice of George III. As we have said, Grattan was himself firmly determined that the native Catholic Irishman should be treated as an equal and given a due share in the country's government; and for a time his schemes went well. First, the law forbidding Catholics to buy land was abolished. Next came their admission to the public offices and other desirable professions from which they had been debarred. Finally, in '93, they got the vote, and it only remained to secure for them the entry into the Irish Parliament itself—a vital necessity, if Catholic interests were to be properly upheld. Pitt favoured the project, though with certain reservations, and '95 he appointed as Viceroy of Ireland a certain Lord Fitzwilliam, whose sympathy with the natives' cause was well known. It seemed as though the last step in the emancipation of the Catholics was to be effected. Once over in

Dublin, however, the new Viceroy exceeded his instructions. He cast aside Pitt's cautious stipulations. He hobnobbed freely with the Irish leaders, and hurried on a bill for admitting Catholics, unconditionally, to the Parliament.

Then came the fatal moment—King George put down his foot, vowed that to sanction such a measure would be to violate his coronation oath, and refused, point-blank, to entertain the thought. Pitt was in an uncomfortable dilemma. The war with France was rising to its height, and he dared not offer to resign. To be brief, he yielded to the King. Fitzwilliam was recalled, and the Bill never passed. Thus Ireland, long tantalised by the deferred hope of freedom, saw the cup dashed, as it were, from her very lips, and, in the bitterness of that disappointment, she turned along other and more desperate paths. For already the second factor in Grattan's tragic failure was rising into sight. A new and revolutionary spirit was abroad in Ireland. The peasants had been fired to wild excitement by the recent events in France. Young patriots, who lacked the steady statesmanship of Grattan, were making wild speeches to enthusiastic crowds and pointing a new road to liberty. Among them were two young firebrands of a dangerous sort—Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Wolfe Tone. Tone was a restless and adventurous spirit who had failed as a lawyer, dabbled in literature and art, and dreamed of founding a colony in the Pacific Isles. In the new revolutionary movement he found a task well suited to his mind. "Independence or nothing" was the cry he raised, and Ireland rose like one man to the new slogan. As early as '92 the "Volunteers" had begun to reassemble, but with a very different purpose in their minds. They were now a lower-class organisation, determined at all costs to dispossess the rich man and the squire, and, since the Protestant poor of Ulster now threw in their lot with the native Catholic peasants, the name they took was the "United Irishmen." Ireland was never so united as in this unhappy cause.

The Rising of '98.—The train was thus laid for an explosion, and the unfortunate recall of Lord Fitzwilliam fired it. It was a golden opportunity for mischief-makers. The war was raging fiercely on the continent. England's hands were tied. Her fleet was fully engaged, and the hour seemed ripe for calling in the French to assist a revolution. Tone was over in Paris, where he had actually conferred with Bonaparte himself; and late in '96 he embarked with General Hoche and a large contingent of French troops for Ireland. During the passage not a single British vessel was even sighted, and the fleet made Bantry Bay unmolested. But the winter gales were rising. It proved impossible to effect a landing, and, after hanging off the coast for upwards of two weeks, the French fleet put back again for Brest. In the next year, '97, the Dutch, who were now allies of the French, were induced to send out a similar expedition, but it was caught and broken up by Admiral Duncan in the battle of Camperdown. Meantime in Ireland things had gone from bad to worse. The Dublin Government was powerless to check the

growing violence. Armed bands had been organised by the landlord faction. Troops had been sent from England to keep order, but with each fresh effort to cow them into submission the temper of the "United Irishmen" became more ugly and more threatening. Hideous outrages were committed upon either side. Men were caught and hung in numbers by the Government troops. Farms were burnt; villages plundered; women flogged. But the rebels had their revenge, and in the dead of night shots would be fired out of the darkness, and there would be one fewer of the hated landlords in the world.

In '98—Ireland's fatal year—things came suddenly to a head. A general insurrection had been planned, and the French were again to be summoned to its aid. The rebels were short of guns (for every step had been taken to disarm them), but they came out with spades and pitch-forks or whatever instrument they could produce. The mail-coaches were held up. Barracks were stormed and burnt; but the British authorities, who had spies in every village, were now thoroughly alert, and only in the southeast did the rising gather full way. Led by a priest named Father Murphy, the rebel bands broke into Wexford city and there butchered every Protestant on whom they could lay hands. But the military were on the march from Dublin. They caught the rebels at their camp on Vinegar Hill, and what followed can scarcely be described as a pitched battle. The hopes so heroically, if rashly, entertained for the deliverance of Ireland ended in an inglorious scramble and a bloody massacre. When all was over, a French fleet, under General Humbert, arrived upon the scene, too late to be of use. It was easily overpowered. Wolfe Tone was captured, tried for his life at Dublin, but before conviction died in his prison cell. Fitzgerald had already suffered the same fate. The Nationalist cause was extinct.

Home Rule had failed and Pitt recognised its failure. The foul blow in the back which had been dealt at England, at the very moment when she was fighting for her life, seemed to deprive the Irish of all claim to mercy. Pitt had not flinched from taking severe measures with the rebels, and he did not shrink now from the one solution of the problem which alone appeared to offer any guarantee of safety. Ireland was to be brought under direct control from England. Her privilege of self-government, which she had so abused, was to be cancelled. The Dublin Parliament was to be merged with the central Parliament at Westminster. The first step necessary, however, was to obtain the Dublin Parliament's consent. In '99, therefore, a measure was put before it for "uniting" the two countries. After a fierce debate, which lasted over twenty hours, the votes were equal. The debate was resumed, a fresh division taken, and this time the proposal was thrown out. There remained but one remedy—familiar enough in England and doubly so in Ireland—bribery. Before the next session seats were methodically bought up by English agents, and the recalcitrant members replaced by ones more submissive. The scandal was notorious. Everyone knew what game was being played, and, when the Act of Union was again

debated in the House, and this time supported by an overwhelming majority of members, it was said that all but seven of the Government's supporters were in receipt of the Government's pay. By this gross manipulation the Irish Parliament voted itself out of existence, and the British Parliament undertook control of the unhappy island's fate. Two sops were offered as some compensation. One hundred Irish members were to sit at Westminster and safeguard, if they could and if they would, the interests of their countrymen. Whether they would depended on the condition that Catholic members should be admitted with the rest, and it was therefore broadly hinted that the admission of the Catholics would certainly be permitted in due course. This second part of the arrangement, though Pitt had honestly intended to fulfil the promise, came to nothing. King George's conscience would not tolerate a Catholic in the Irish Parliament, much less than in his own. Pitt's protests were in vain, and in 1801, as we have seen already, he was driven to resign. For him the tragedy lay not so much in the brief loss of power as in the sacrifice which he had made of his most cherished principles. He had been false to his ideals of freedom and reform. For Ireland it was something worse than a tragedy. The Union was in truth the nation's grave.

CHAPTER XV

INVASION OR TRAFALGAR

The Treaty of Amiens was signed in March of 1802 and by the late spring of 1803 France and England were again at war. What causes led to this new rupture it is of no great importance to enquire. Peace with Napoleon was impossible. The provisions of the Treaty he observed neither in spirit nor in letter. In Holland, which he had promised to evacuate, French garrisons were ostentatiously maintained. In North Italy, the storm-centre of continental jealousies, he flung out a novel challenge by accepting for himself the Presidency of the newly formed "Cis-Alpine" State. Egypt, the gateway to the British Empire in the East, was once more pestered by his agents. Luckily for England, Malta, that valuable half-way house to Egypt, was still held by British troops; and, though by the terms of her agreement England was pledged to recognise its independence, she now not unjustifiably refused to give it up. Napoleon was furious—furious at the breach of a treaty which he himself had never tried to keep; but with him it was always "Heads I win and tails you lose," and he made a great show of indignation. England stuck to her colours, and for once he bluffed too far. On 18th May, 1803, hostilities were resumed. Henceforward, until the spring of 1805—a space of two full years—the British were fighting an uphill battle for their very lives, and fighting it alone. No allies came to England's rescue or menaced France upon the Rhine. It was a straight-

fought issue between Napoleon and England, a struggle of land-power against sea-power, the proverbial duel of the "elephant" and the "whale," in which neither antagonist could obtain a mastery in the other's element. To strike at Napoleon on land was for England impossible; equally was it impossible for him to strike at her—except on one condition, the control, for a brief but a sufficient interval, over the narrow seas. Never, indeed, in the whole course of its existence did the British nation stand in such instant jeopardy. Between England and perdition lay nothing but that strip of treacherous water—a passage, in fair weather, of four hours at most—and (happily more reliable) her fleet.

The Army of Invasion.—The fatal megalomania—the insolence, the ambition, the imperialism run mad—which was first half to ruin Europe and then wholly to ruin him, was now beginning to disclose itself in the plans of Bonaparte. In France he was supreme. His title of "First Consul" had already been transmuted to "Consulship for life"; and, before another year was over, he was to assume yet larger powers. In the last days of 1804 he summoned the Pope to Paris, received his benediction in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, and there, in presumptuous mimicry of Charles the Great, was consecrated "Emperor of the French." It was characteristic of his growing arrogance that, when the Pope was about to place the crown upon his head, Napoleon took it into his own hands and performed the act himself. Emperor now in power no less than in title, he assumed an Emperor's pomp; and what fantastic schemes of world-dominion were already shaping in his fertile brain we shall see soon enough. Meanwhile, with the true instinct of a strategist, he perceived that England's conquest was the key-stone to them all, and, when in the summer of 1803 the war was resumed again in earnest, he bent the whole vigour of his unrivalled organising genius to the project of invasion.

The French Fleet, England's old competitor, had been sorely crippled by the Revolution; and democratic control during the early stages had very seriously impaired its discipline. Napoleon did all he could do speed up new construction and to provide efficient sailors for the manning of his ships; but he saw that it would certainly be months, and might be years, before the British Navy could be safely challenged; and meanwhile, impatient of delay, he devised another plan. On the hills above Boulogne—within view of the white Kent cliffs on a clear day—there was posted, and had been posted for these three years past, a large contingent of French troops. This "Army of Invasion" was now raised to a hundred thousand men; and Napoleon hoped, though in this he never succeeded, to increase it by half as much again. Flat-bottomed boats were built in prodigious numbers through the length and breadth of France and carried by road to Boulogne. The soldiers were drilled in the routine of embarkation. Every man knew his post, and his course of action when the English shore was reached. Nothing, in fact, was now needed but an opportunity to slip across; and for such an oppor-

tunity Napoleon waited. A calm sea, a dark night,—and one fine morning, when the sun rose above the mist, the Army of Invasion would be marching up through Kent. So cocksure was Napoleon of achieving his design that he caused a medal to be struck, which bore the inscription, somewhat premature, “*Descente en Angleterre*” and below—a crowning impudence—“*Frappé à Londres.*”

Under the shadow of this threat England lay expectant for two mortal years. The terror of invasion struck deep into men’s minds. To simple rustics the thought of “Boney’s” landing was a perpetual nightmare; and for years to come his very name became a household word for frightening naughty babies. The country, however, braced itself to the ordeal, and counter-preparations were hurriedly devised. Within a few months a force of three hundred thousand volunteers was organised and drilled—with Fox, “the pacifist” amongst them. Trenches and fortifications were thrown up at likely landings. Small, round “martello” towers were placed at intervals along the beach. Instructions were issued, in case the worst should happen, for the blocking of roads and the systematic destruction of provisions. A chain of semaphores linked London with the coast. Beacons were placed ready upon every hilltop; and there were night alarms, when sleepy volunteers would tumble out of bed and rush off, never doubting that the French had really come. But, if there was vigilance on land, much more was there at sea. Night and day the Channel was patrolled by a fleet of fast, light frigates, and these formed an impenetrable barrier to the Army of Invasion. Napoleon’s knowledge of the sea was rudimentary; and, at first, he scarcely realised how utterly at the mercy of such vessels his unwieldy flotilla of flat-bottomed boats must be. With the best organisations in the world his army could never have got out of Boulogne harbour under half-a-dozen tides. Once at sea, the flotilla was bound to drift and scatter on the currents; and a series of broad-sides from a single English frigate would have sent boat-load upon boat-load to the bottom. Nor were the frigates all; for behind their screen the ships of the line were waiting, ready to pounce down at the first signal from British scouts, and pinning the French fleets immobile to their harbour-bases. No more complete blockade had been known in history. It was made almost impossible for the enemy to move, and the British admirals—with more reason than Napoleon—were equally confident of their success. “I don’t say the French won’t come,” said Lord St. Vincent, “I only say that they can’t come by sea.” That was one reason why, in the first months of 1804, Napoleon’s plans underwent a sudden change. His navy was steadily improving. Its numbers, if not equal, were now not vastly inferior to the British. So, abandoning his project of a stealthy raid, he determined openly to challenge England’s command of the high seas.

II

The British Blockade.—The epic struggle which ended at Trafalgar was a crowning vindication of the British Navy's confidence. Its earlier stages, during the period of blockade, were perhaps a more searching test than the battle itself; and none but the toughest of tough sailors could have survived that long ordeal. Before the final voyage, which carried him to victory, Nelson was continuously at sea for two whole years, and during those years he left his ship but thrice and for less than an hour each time. Collingwood's ships were out for twenty-two months on end without every dropping anchor; and when we consider the conditions of the service, the closeness of the quarters, and the hardness of the fare, we may well marvel what manner of men these sailors were that stood it. Often they were the off-scourings of the nation, criminals released from the jails, or men caught by the press-gang and sent as lads unwillingly to sea. Once on board they were subjected to a stern and even barbarous discipline, scourgings with the cat, confinement in iron shackles, or, at worst, the inhuman punishment of "keel-hauling."¹ Hardened beyond belief, they learnt to endure untold privations and agonies of pain, the most primitive surgery without an anæsthetic, operations which make the very blood run cold. Brutalised they doubtless were; but from brutes they were transformed to patriots and heroes by the inspiration of their captains' genius and devotion.

Lord St. Vincent had now retired to the Admiralty Office; but there were still afloat many as great as he; one greater. There was Collingwood, of whom Thackeray declared that "nature had never made a better gentleman," and who, on the morning of Trafalgar, put on light shoes instead of heavy sea-boots, because they were "so much more manageable for the surgeon." There was Cornwallis of bulldog-like tenacity, known better in the service as "Blue Billy," because, as soon as ever his squadron got to port, he ran up the blue signal to make ready again for sea. Above all, there was Nelson himself—now Viscount Nelson—a frail, meagre figure of a man, with a womanish cast about his features and the lithe limbs of a boy, yet winning, by virtue of these very qualities, a kind of tender awe and a half-superstitious reverence from the rough, hulking tars among whom he daily moved. This idol of the Navy was a strange mixture of different qualities. His nature combined in an extraordinary degree cool subtlety of intellect with hot emotions. His private life was marred by a romantic passion for a beautiful lady who was not his wife; his public life was one long sacrifice to the call of arduous duty. His constitution, naturally weak and further enfeebled by the loss of an arm and an eye, made him an easy prey to sea-sickness and various disorders of the nerves, which kept

¹ The victim of this brutal punishment was dragged under water by a rope passed down one side of the ship and up the other—a process not unlikely to prove fatal.

him often confined to his own cabin; yet, when the enemy was sighted and the shots began to fly, his eager spirit triumphed and he was at once himself again, excitable and radiant as a child. In the close tactics of battle, and when he had decided to engage, he was a furious fighter, bold to the very verge of recklessness; yet, in the wider strategy of a campaign, he shaped his plans by the most scientific use of information, and the dispositions which ensured his final triumph were the fruit of long and anxious labour of the brain. Happily he was backed at home by men who knew both how to trust and how to use him. First, at the Admiralty was the aged chief, Lord Barham, eighty years old, yet as clear-headed an organiser of victory as though he had been a young man in his prime. Secondly, there was Pitt, now at length, in June of 1804, restored to his old post. It was high time. Addington, the incompetent Minister who had displaced him shortly before the Amiens Treaty, was useless at such a crisis as now threatened; and, in the coming grapple with Napoleon's fiercest onslaught, the nation could at least rest satisfied with the exchange and feel confident that the men on whom its destiny now hung were the best available.

Disposition of French Fleets.—When at the outset of the year 1804 Napoleon decided to challenge England's supremacy at sea, there was one obvious preliminary on which depended the very foundation of success. The squadrons of his fleet were widely scattered at many different bases; and, until these various squadrons were united, nothing effectual could possibly be done. It was therefore essential for two or more of them to regain the liberty of movement so far denied them by British sentinels; and throughout the passage of this year Napoleon pressed scheme after scheme upon his admirals for the purpose of eluding the blockade. In some a hitch occurred and marred them almost before they were conceived; some were indefinitely postponed; others frustrated by the English fleet. All came to nothing; and at the close of 1804 Napoleon seemed as far away as ever from achieving the junction he desired. At the turn of the year, however, an important new factor came to his assistance. Spain, although nominally Napoleon's ally, had hitherto refrained from joining in the war; but now, insulted by England's seizure of her treasure-ships, she yielded to his pressure; her fleet became henceforth an extra pawn for him to play with; and, with this valuable addition to his strength, the game entered a new phase.

Villeneuve's Voyage.—In order properly to appreciate Napoleon's naval strategy for 1805, it is essential to grasp well the disposition of the French and Spanish fleets. To begin our survey in the north, there was first of all at Brest the main French concentration under Admiral Ganteaume. Watching him, and based on Plymouth, was Cornwallis with the main British squadron. Cornwallis's blockade had been continuously maintained since the May of 1803. It was equally maintained throughout the whole of 1805: and the real failure of Napoleon's plan resulted from the fact that it was never broken. If Ganteaume had got out, British ships might for a brief space have been drawn out of the

Channel; the Boulogne flotilla, loaded with the Army of Invasion, might have put out to sea; and the campaign have moved to a very different ending. Despite, however, all his efforts to escape, Ganteaume remained in Brest. South of Brest, there were small fleets at Rochefort, Ferrol, and Cadiz, the last two mainly Spanish. These also were blockaded, though less effectually, by British ships. Finally, in the Gulf of Lyons, there was a considerable French squadron at Toulon under Admiral Villeneuve. This Nelson had been watching since the beginning of the war; but in these more distant waters an equally close blockade was quite impossible; and opportunities were certain to arise for Villeneuve to escape. Napoleon now intended that he should, and planned that simultaneously Ganteaume should break from Brest, and the two effect a junction in the far Atlantic. This second part of the scheme Cornwallis foiled; and Ganteaume was, as we have said, held tight.

On 29th March, however, Villeneuve got away out of Toulon, picked up a Spanish squadron at Cadiz, and made off to the West Indies (whither, in point of fact, the Rochefort squadron had already sailed, but, failing to fall in with him, put back). The West Indies, for commercial and other reasons, were a weak spot in Britain's armour; and Villeneuve's feint at them (for it was no more than that) was shrewdly planned. He expected the British to follow him; and sure enough they did. For a while, indeed, though fully aware of the Toulon fleet's escape, Nelson was completely in the dark about its destination. He ranged the Mediterranean anxiously in search, at last picked up the news from passing vessels, and followed across the Atlantic upon Villeneuve's tracks. His ships made better going than the Frenchman's, and by early June he was out among the islands, and not a hundred miles distant from his quarry. False information, however, threw him off the scent, and presently he heard to his intense disgust that Villeneuve had doubled back, and was making tracks for home—making, that is, for Ganteaume and the Channel, and *he had five days' start*. It was now a race against time which should arrive the first in European waters, Nelson or Villeneuve; but with admirable foresight Nelson sent ahead a fast light brig to warn the authorities of the impending danger. The brig arrived in time; a squadron under Calder was at once made ready, and dispatched to intercept Villeneuve's returning fleet. Calder fell in with it in misty weather, and fought an indecisive action somewhere in the Bay, then weakly withdrew (for which he was afterwards court-martialled) and allowed Villeneuve's ships to make Ferrol. They were thoroughly exhausted after their double ocean voyage; but Napoleon, seeing himself within a touch of victory, ordered them out of Ferrol to the Channel mouth. It was now or never for a junction with Ganteaume. Ganteaume was ready and waiting; but Cornwallis, as we may guess, was ready too; and at the sight of his ships upon the skyline poor Villeneuve lost all nerve. He turned south again in a panic of fear and trembling and ran into Cadiz. The great game was up, and Napoleon himself knew it. Other plans took possession of his nimble brain. Within a week

or two, the great camp on Boulogne hill was broken up; the Army of Invasion was ordered off upon a very different errand; and the grand project of sea-victory was forgotten—from the moment when it failed. The seal was to be set upon its failure by the hand of Nelson himself. But the prime author of its failure, if one may be singled out, was the man who throughout these days of anxious crisis had held inviolate the keys of Brest—Cornwallis.

Trafalgar.—Meanwhile, with a true sailor's instinct for returning to his post, Nelson had made back for the Mediterranean. At Gibraltar he learnt the news—how the enemy he sought had been duly met and countered—and with that he put home for England. Less than a month later, on 15th September, he was once more embarking on the "Victory"

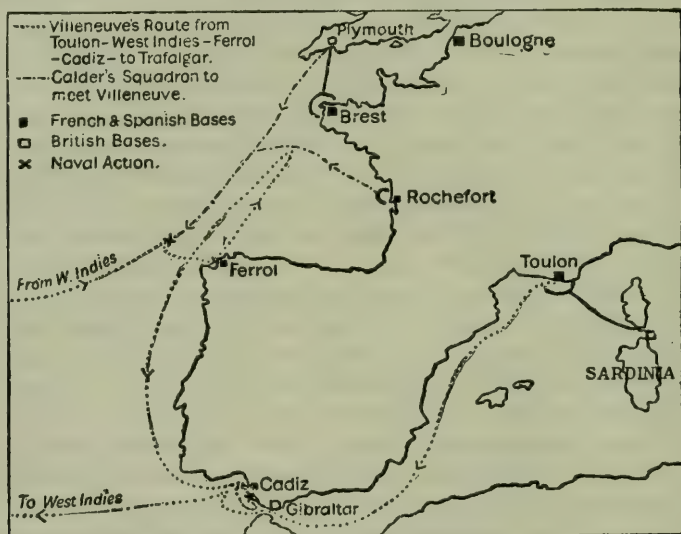


FIG. 43.—THE CAMPAIGN OF TRAFALGAR.

at Portsmouth. "Many were in tears," says Southey, as he went on board; and Nelson himself felt a strange presentiment that he would never more return. On reaching Lisbon, he learnt that Villeneuve's fleet, which still formed his main objective, was lying safely ensconced in Cadiz harbour, watched rather than blockaded by Collingwood's four ships. Had it remained in harbour, the battle of Trafalgar would never have been fought; but Napoleon, spitefully indignant, as a pettish child, over the failure of his plans, was taunting the admiral with cowardice, and egging him on at least to show a fight; and at last, on 19th October, news came to Nelson near Gibraltar straits that the enemy were out. He at once moved up the coast to within touch.

At dawn on the 21st the enemy were sighted, moving along shore in a southerly direction. At ten o'clock they changed their tack, and began to double back northward towards Cadiz. They were formed in

a long line, bent slightly horse-shoe fashion; and they numbered, including both French and Spanish, thirty-three ships of the line. Though Nelson could muster but twenty-seven in all he showed not the slightest hesitation to engage. His plan, should such an opportunity be offered him, had long been formed; and, though great controversy has raged around the subject, there can now be no doubt whatever that the plan's main outline was very closely followed in the battle which ensued. This plan, the "Nelson touch," was an adaptation of Rodney's old manœuvre, the breaking of the line; only on this occasion the line was to be broken not at one point, but at two. "If I break through in two places," a Spanish novelist¹ makes Nelson say, "and if I put the part between the two places between two fires, I shall grab every stick of it"; and that is almost precisely what he did. With this object in view his ships

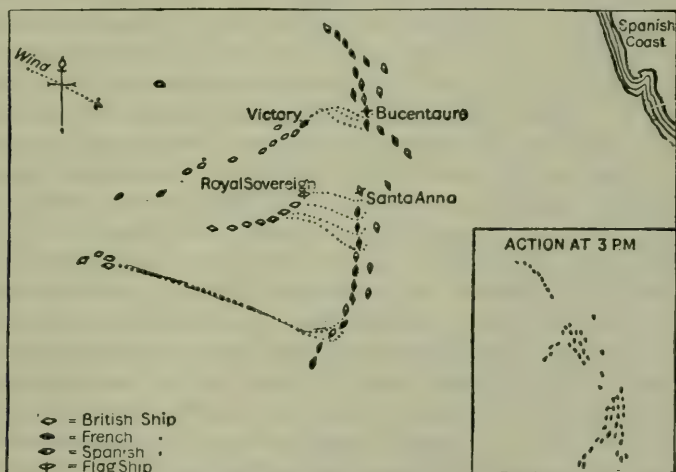


FIG. 44.—THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

were divided into two separate columns. One, led by Collingwood in his ship the *Royal Sovereign*, broke through the tail of the French line, and by noon engaged it closely. Half an hour later, the other column, headed by the *Victory* herself, struck home about the centre. Thus, while the rear and middle of his line were struggling for dear life, Villeneuve's van was left completely out of action, and before it could wear round upon the battle, the battle had been turned to a defeat. Except that the engagement bunched into two main knots in rear and centre, it resolved itself from the first into a "pell-mell fight." As ship laid up by ship, there ensued a furious duel, maintained at such close quarters that at times boarding became an actual possibility; and some French and Spanish gunners even closed their lower ports for fear the British tars might find an entrance. Meanwhile, the broadsides

¹ Quoted by Fitchett, whose narrative, together with Sir H. Newbolt's, is the most readable and picturesque of the stories of Trafalgar.

belched forth shot and flame. Timbers were ripped to splinters; masts went by the board; rigging was torn to tatters. Collingwood's *Royal Sovereign* compelled the Spanish flag-ship to surrender; but was itself so seriously disabled that it had to be towed out of the line. The *Victory* likewise first engaged the *Bucentaure*, which was flying Villeneuve's flag; then ran so close against the *Redoubtable* that the rigging became locked. It was during this encounter that a French sharpshooter in the mizzen-top picked out Lord Nelson's figure. The ball penetrated in the region of the spine; and Nelson was carried to the cock-pit. "I am a dead man," he told Hardy, the favourite of his captains; "thank God I have done my duty." News came to him that fifteen of the enemy had struck. "That is well," he answered, "but I had bargained for twenty." Then, with a last thought for the fleet under his charge, he warned them they must anchor; for a gale was rising. Meantime, the French van had at length swung round and entered on the action; but its assistance came too late, and soon it too was scattered in the general rout. Some of the enemy went north, some south; but on the heaving water, among the British ships, many lay broken and dismasted, able to move no more. Desultory firing continued till 4.30. Then, as the news of the victory was reported to Lord Nelson, the cannonade died down; and to the sound of the parting salvoes the great spirit passed away in the hour of his triumph.

Austerlitz and Jena.—Such was the final issue of the grand project of invasion. But Napoleon had, as always, two bolts in his quiver, and he used the second now. During the previous spring Pitt, nothing daunted by earlier discouragements, had been working hard to form another league of European Powers. The invitation was well-timed; the Powers had now better reason, even than before, for fearing French aggression; for, bad as a revolutionary Republic had once seemed, a militarist Dictator was infinitely worse; and in the summer of 1805, while Nelson was chasing Villeneuve to and fro on the Atlantic, Austria, Russia, and England had once again joined hands in the third and last of Pitt's great coalitions. Yet, as it proved, had Napoleon himself prayed for it, nothing more opportune than this event could have been vouchsafed to him. Here at last in Central Europe, if not across the Channel, his Grand Army of Invasion might find work to do, and failure at sea could quickly be redressed by victory on land; all that was needed was a swift and sudden blow before the Coalition had leisure to prepare; and for swiftness, stunning in its series of ruthless hammer-strokes, the campaign now to be witnessed has never been surpassed. On 15th August Villeneuve turned back from his attempt to join Ganteaume off Brest. Ten days later, seeing the game was up, Napoleon determined on the new plan of operations. The Grand Army left Boulogne, and while Nelson was on the way to his culminating triumph, Napoleon was already marching on the Rhine. By 21st October, the very day of Trafalgar, he had reached the upper Danube, surrounded one Austrian army under General Mack and compelled it to capitulate at Ulm. By the

middle of November he was in Vienna, and 2nd December, after three short months of marching, he had shattered Austria's last hope and a force of allied Russians on the field of Austerlitz.

Southern Europe lay at his feet; yet his work was but half done. The King of Prussia, impudently posing as a second Frederic without possessing a tithe of Frederic's powers, had determined to oppose Napoleon's progress, and had joined the Coalition's diminished ranks. That winter, spring, and summer Napoleon waited, giving his army a much-needed rest; then in the autumn of 1806 he sprang his full weight on Prussia, overwhelmed her forces at Auerstadt and Jena on the self-same day, and finally, marching his army up the Baltic coast through Poland, compelled the Russian Tsar to sue for peace. On a raft, moored in mid-stream of the frontier river Niemen, the two great monarchs met, and there they arranged between them, as though the best of friends, to divide the continent. By the Treaty of Tilsit the old frontiers were redrawn. Prussia was shorn of half her provinces. Poland went part to Russia; part became a vassal-state to France. Meanwhile in central Europe Napoleon already reigned supreme, and Austria had paid dearly for defeat. For what it was worth (and it was worth but little now) the nominal control of Germany was taken from her. Unlamented and unmissed, after its thousand years of history, the Holy Roman Empire ceased to be. In its place was formed the great "Confederation of the Rhine," a vast regrouping of the German States, organised on the model of French law, and governed wholly at the dictate of Napoleon's will. Like a second Cæsar, he "bestrode the narrow world like a Colossus," and the uncomfortable memory of Trafalgar had, to all intents and purposes, been wiped out. Within a year of being driven off the water Napoleon had become indisputable master of the land, and England found herself in very deed alone. When the news of Austerlitz came through to London, Pitt had seen in a flash the meaning of that blow. "Roll up the map of Europe," he exclaimed, "it will not be wanted these ten years"; and, though he turned in bitterness of spirit to gather up the broken threads of his diplomacy, the strength he had so lavishly expended in his country's cause was failing fast. Broken-hearted, he took to his bed, and in a few weeks' time was gone. "O my country! How I leave my country!" were the last words he uttered, and in the black days which followed they found a tragic echo in many English hearts. Sorer need had indeed never fallen on his country; but there was no other Pitt.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PENINSULAR WAR AND LEIPSIC

With the collapse of Prussia and his consequent domination of all northern Europe Napoleon's struggle against Britain entered a new phase; and between this second phase and the first phase just concluded

there is at once a striking similarity and a no less striking difference. The first phase had consisted of a plan—the project of invasion; of a reverse—Trafalgar—which shattered that plan to atoms; of a recovery, swift as it was complete—the campaigns of Austerlitz and Jena. The second phase was similar in its initial stages, very different in its last. It too began with a plan for humbling Britain—the “Continental System”; that plan, like the other, broke under British pressure—the work of Wellington in the Peninsula. Then the luck turned; the recovery which Napoleon sought, fickle destiny denied him, and his strength, first wasted among Russian snows, was challenged by the armies of indignant Europe and overwhelmed conclusively at Leipsic. A brief interval, and there was still to follow the last phase—the escape from Elba and the campaign of Waterloo.

I

The Continental System.—After Jena in 1806 Napoleon had, so to speak, the continent to play with. There was not a country (except Russia, with which he was soon to deal) that was not either his subject or his ally; he could levy blackmail upon all to get money or supplies; and with such unlimited resources at his back he turned to settle his account with England. It was not, however, Bonaparte the general, but Napoleon the statesman that England now had most to fear. His subtle brain was weaving a new scheme for her undoing. He saw that this “nation of shopkeepers” was first and last dependent on its trade, and that, although unable to defeat her navy, he might still hope to defeat her mercantile marine. So in November, 1806, the word went forth to Europe in the so-called “Berlin Decrees” that the trade of England was placed under a ban. Henceforth no commerce, no traffic, not even private letters, might pass between England and the ports of all such countries as Napoleon had the power or title to control; this, according to his own interpretation, meant every state in Europe, and England was, in short, to be cut off from the whole world.¹ Now, a blockade to be effectual must be rigidly complete, and a single leakage was alone sufficient to defeat Napoleon’s plan. Nor, as it proved, was such a leakage easy to prevent. English merchandise was smuggled through by mercenary Dutchmen and transported on the sly to Germany; other goods were, with equal secrecy, smuggled back to England. Then, too, there were many countries that suffered even more severely than England did herself from the stoppage of supplies; these raised indignant protest at the sacrifice demanded, and the sight of foodstuffs wantonly destroyed because they hailed from England was enough to

¹ Napoleon’s own short-sightedness was equally to blame for the ultimate failure of the blockade. According to the old-fashioned economic theory, which he followed, it was to his advantage to ship French grain to England in return for English gold, because, by this transaction, the enemy country would, so he thought, be gradually impoverished. To this theory he adhered despite all warnings from his best advisers, and by so doing he materially assisted England to escape starvation.

goad many a hungry crowd to fury. Little, however, did Napoleon care. He meant to starve England to submission, even if France herself were starving first, and, since the "Continental System" was the only instrument he had of accomplishing his purpose, he was resolved to use it to the bitter end. And, indeed, ere long the "Continental System" had grown to all appearances most dangerously complete. By 1807 there

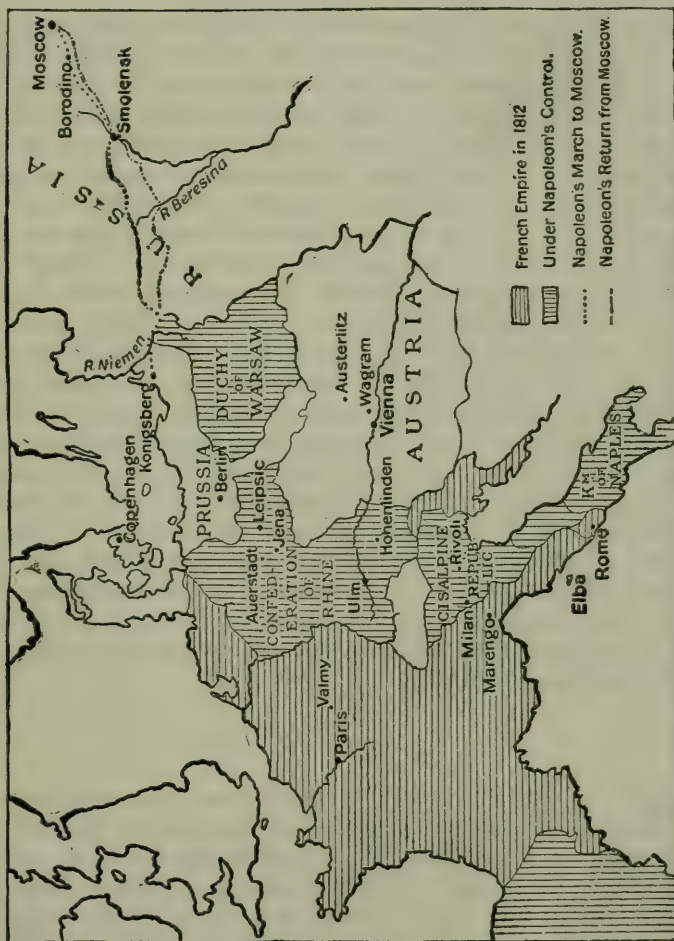


FIG. 45.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE NAPOLEON'S CONTINENTAL CAMPAIGNS.

was not a State in Europe which dared openly, at least, to defy his orders. Upon Russia, like the Philistia of the Psalmist, he had triumphed signally. Prussia was his "wash-pot"; over Austria he had "cast his shoe." His relatives and captains had been given royal crowns in a dozen subject countries. One brother, Louis, was made King of Holland; another, Joseph, was made King of Naples; to a third, Jerome, Westphalia was allotted. His stepson was Viceroy of Italy. Murat, his brother-in-law, had a little German duchy of his own. Berna-

dotte, Berthier, his marshals, and Talleyrand had each his petty State. Europe, in fact, had become a family preserve; and wherever England turned in her despair the name of Bonaparte was written ominously across her path. One country, however, has not as yet been mentioned—the peninsula Spain; and Spain was, in fact, to prove the crux of the whole situation and the rock on which Napoleon's scheme would ultimately break.

Napoleon, Spain and England.—It was in the spring of 1808 that Napoleon decided that Spain, though she was already his obsequious ally, must be brought more closely still beneath his grip. The method he devised was characteristic of the man. He first induced the aged Spanish monarch to arrest his son, Prince Ferdinand, for treason and to put the unfortunate young man in jail; then, when the people rose in Ferdinand's support, he got the old man to abdicate and, without the shadow of a title, *appointed his own brother, Joseph Bonaparte, to take possession of the vacant throne.* French troops were sent to occupy Madrid; and, when the Spanish rose in protest, they were ruthlessly shot down. In a twinkling the whole country was in arms; bands of irregular "guerrillas" gathered on every hand; and the new King Joseph had no sooner occupied his capital than he was forced to quit. The fact was that Napoleon had put his hand into a hornets' nest. Spain was a nation in a sense in which Germany, Austria, and Italy were not; and, in attempting to foist his nominee upon the Spanish throne, he was tampering with the independence of a proud and ancient race. If, therefore, the Peninsula was to be conquered, it could not be done by a few lightning marches or by a few spectacular triumphs in the field, but only by the slow and arduous process of wearing the national resistance down. It was Spain, in short, that gave Napoleon his first serious check; and, if danger threatened England from this monstrous usurpation, in it lay also England's opportunity.

II

After Pitt's death, in the first weeks of 1806, there had been no fit successor to occupy his place. A Whig Government was formed, known as the "Ministry of all the Talents," yet sadly deficient in the one talent needful for prosecuting war. After the manner of Whigs, they sought peace and ensued it; but Napoleon was in no mood to grant them their desire. The Continental System was his only answer; and soon the "Ministry of all the Talents" grew tired of the attempt. Fox, their most brilliant and hard-working member, died; and in the spring of 1807 they gave way to a Tory Government, of which the nominal leader was the Duke of Portland, but in which the real ability belonged to Canning, the Foreign Minister, and Castlereagh, the Secretary for War. The new Government set to work with creditable vigour to defeat, if possible, Napoleon's schemes. Blockade was answered by blockade; and, by the "Orders in Council," they sternly refused the entry of Napoleon's

ports to all shipping both of neutrals and of belligerents alike. This was, of course, a serious blow to France and Europe; for the British Navy was a more effective instrument of blockade than all the Emperor's manifestoes. But its effect was double-edged; for by the inconvenience which it caused to neutrals England made new enemies, and, in 1812, the American Republic, now the chief neutral among trading countries, was actually driven to declaring war upon her. Though the naval and military encounters along the Canadian border had no vital bearing on the main struggle, cessation of trade caused much suffering to England; and the unfriendly gesture did much to embitter the relations between the two nations. Meanwhile the Tory Government had not remained content with a purely maritime activity. England's military resources were not adequate, indeed, to challenge the enemy decisively on land; nor, such as they were, were they very skilfully handled. As in the earlier war against the Revolution, there was too much dissipation of British forces. One expedition was sent, in 1807, to coerce the Turkish Sultan. Another was sent to Walcheren in 1809 to destroy the Antwerp docks. Both failed to serve the smallest useful purpose; and both occupied troops which were needed infinitely more elsewhere. But, in the long run, England's politicians came to realise that Spain was her most profitable sphere of action. The national resistance which Napoleon had there evoked gave her an ally that she sought elsewhere in vain. Portugal, England's friend by old treaty and tradition, offered an excellent starting-point for operations; and from August of 1808, when British first troops landed near Lisbon, until 1813, when the French were driven finally from Spain, England's main efforts were rightly concentrated upon the task of rescuing the Peninsula from Napoleon's grip.

The British Army.—It was not, however, to the authorities at home that the chief credit of England's ultimate victory was due. The army, like the navy, discovered its true self in the process of the war. It was nearly fifty years since English regiments had won particular distinction on the battlefield; but the prolonged ordeal it was now to undergo revealed once more, as in the days of Wolfe and Marlborough, the indomitable genius of a fighting race. At the outset of the war good leadership was rare, for promotion went too much by influence. But there were many officers, none the less, worthy of the best traditions of the service, cool in battle, dogged in defeat, full of kindly consideration for the rank and file, and, above all, perfect gentlemen—men, for instance, such as Sir John Moore, the soul of honour and the type of chivalry, or the two Napier brothers, Charles and William, the famous historian of the war, or Sir Arthur Wellesley, himself destined, when all was over, to win his more familiar title as Duke of Wellington, but now freshly home from India, where he had helped to defeat Tippoo and had won his own great triumph over the Mahrattas at Assaye. The rank and file were socially of the same stamp as the sailors. They were recruited for long terms of voluntary enlistment, and, since the

rates of pay were miserably low, few but the poorest and the ne'er-dowells were attracted to the service.¹ The raw material which composed the regiments that won at Waterloo were described by Wellington himself as the "scum of the earth." Weedy, ill-fed lads marched side by side with worn-out veterans; all swore, and drank, and gambled in the most thorough-going fashion. Thieving was a part of the profession; and, though Wellington forbade it, loot was still the chief attraction of campaigns. Yet here too, as in the navy, discipline produced incredible results. Men learnt to advance as coolly to a shot-swept breach as to a church parade. They learnt to receive a charge of cavalry upon their bayonets without the tremor of a muscle. More difficult still, when the enemy's round-shot came plunging towards their ranks, visible to the eye and often bounding like a cricket-ball along the surface of the ground, they learnt to stand immovable as statues, forbidden even to step from the shot's way, though its merest blow would shatter limbs like touch-wood. The firing drill was carried to a high efficiency. Their "Brown Bess" muskets were still loaded at the muzzle, the powder, ball, and wadding rammed home with a long stick, the priming for the flint-lock poured out of a flask. Yet so quickly was this done that a trained man could fire two shots a minute; and, to increase the rate, the ranks fired their volleys in relays, one standing, the other dropped upon one knee. As a rule, fire was reserved for an exceedingly short range, and often the soldiers waited till the white of the enemies' eyes was clearly seen, then loosed their volley and followed with the bayonet. Besides unusual courage, the most incredible endurance was demanded of these men. Their equipment was of the rudest; their boots and clothing were reduced to shreds and tatters and could seldom be replaced. Camp kitchens were, as yet, a luxury. Field hospitals there were none. Yet, under these conditions, the British managed somehow or other to survive and, what is more, to beat the troops of the best general of the world out of the peninsula of Spain. But it took six years of bitter suffering before the job was done.

Vimiero and Wellington's Task.—When, in the summer of 1808, the French armies began to arrive across the Pyrenees, the task awaiting them was by no means so easy as it seemed. They arrived in immense numbers, and, before he had finished, Napoleon poured troops by the hundred thousand into this devastating theatre of war. But big battalions alone could not buy victory. The enemy was of the most insidious kind. The scattered bands of peasants, which might melt and scatter into the hills at a regiment's approach, would re-form next day in the valley on the farther side; and the French hold could never be secure or permanent, except in those districts where their troops were actually engaged. In such a country, too, mere numbers were a positive encumbrance.

¹ Castlereagh, however, improved on a new system introduced by Pitt, whereby a militia was formed, raised by compulsory ballot for home service, but also used in 1808 and onwards to feed the battalions at the front.

It was the usual practice of Napoleon's armies to live upon the land in which they found themselves. But Spain is a barren country, parched, sterile, waterless. The roads were vile or more often non-existent; the peasants were always on the watch to cut communications; it was impossible to concentrate more than a portion of Napoleon's troops on any given point; and the problem of commissariat proved from first to last

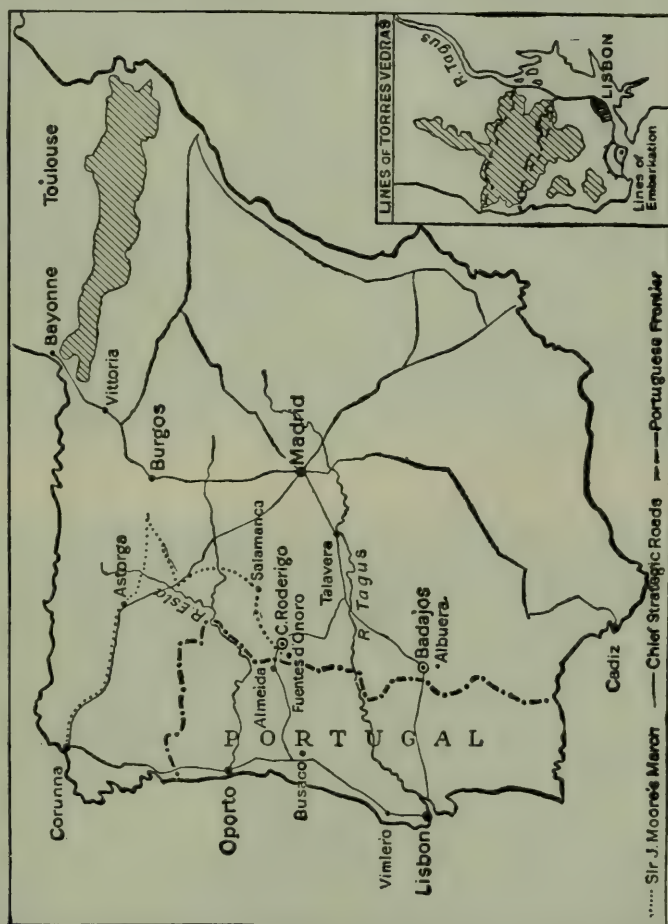


FIG. 46.—THE PENINSULA WAR.

the crux of the campaign. Widely different was the task which confronted Wellington when, a few weeks later, he disembarked his troops a little north of Lisbon, inflicted a severe defeat on the French at Vimi-ero and, having forced them, under the "Convention of Cintra," to evacuate the whole of Portugal, himself proceeded to occupy the capital and to organise at leisure for the coming campaign. Lisbon, with its port upon the Tagus, was a first-rate base. Into it British ships could pour supplies with no fear of interruption; and (except through the

incompetence of home authorities) Wellington was not likely to be so much troubled by the commissariat problem. As a set-off to this, however, the force at his disposal was ridiculously small. The Portuguese and Spanish "regulars" were at first such undependable allies that he would almost have been better off without them; and, against Napoleon's myriads, he had of British troops no more at the outset than thirteen thousand men. Wellington's position, in fact, was like that of a pigmy fighting with his back to the water against a band of underfed giants, but aided in the unequal combat by a swarm of stinging gnats, the source of constant annoyance and confusion to his foe. The Englishman's one hope of victory lay therefore in a policy of wearing his opponents out. To attempt to reconquer Spain against such odds was, in the early stages, far beyond his dreams. The best course open to him was to attract against himself the largest possible number of Napoleon's troops, and, having thus drawn away the garrisons from the outlying districts, to leave the local peasantry to do the rest; and this is precisely what was done.¹ If Wellington advanced, it was to draw the French. If he retreated, it was equally to draw the French. The conditions of the country and the climate helped him; and little by little the strength of Napoleon's army was sapped and drained away by the dogged persistence of the Englishman. "It was the Spanish ulcer," Napoleon afterwards confessed, "which was the cause of my undoing."

March of Sir John Moore.—The first phase in the perilous game of drawing the enemy consisted of two bold dashes out of Portugal into the French "Tom Tiddler's Ground"—one made by Sir John Moore, the other by Wellington himself. The terms of the Truce of Cintra had been most displeasing to the authorities in London, who would have dearly liked to see the whole French army made prisoners then and there; and Wellington had accordingly been summoned away home to face a court of enquiry. During his absence, Sir John Moore, who had just arrived in Portugal with reinforcements, was given command over the British troops; and towards the end of October he ventured out of Lisbon and took the road north-eastward into Spain. About the same time, as it so happened, Napoleon himself had appeared on the scene. He scattered the Spanish armies easily, marched on Madrid, which his nervous brother Joseph had previously evacuated, and thence planned to strike at Lisbon and the south of Spain. The hour was critical. Unless instant steps were taken, the annihilating force of the French numbers would drive the British back into the sea, overrun the whole length and breadth of the peninsula, and occupy its precious southern ports.

Some bold stroke was clearly needed to divert them; and on such a stroke Moore immediately resolved. He was already half-way towards the Spanish capital when the French were entering it, and it struck

¹ At the same time the fact that Wellington's army was not overwhelmed, was due to the enormous number of Frenchmen required to guard their long communications against the Spanish guerrillas.



SIR JOHN MOORE

From the painting by Lawrence



HORATIO VISCOUNT NELSON

From the painting by Abbot

him that the long communications between Madrid and the French frontier were in reality Napoleon's most tender spot. A threat at the great high road leading through Burgos to Bayonne would upset the enemy's whole calculations. It was December, and the mountain passes were already choked with snow, when Napoleon heard with mingled amusement and concern that the tiny British army, barely twenty thousand strong, was cutting in upon his north and had already reached a point within fifty miles of his main communications. Despite the bitter weather, Napoleon lost no time. He ordered Soult, who was posted in that district, to close in upon Moore's rear; then, with fifty thousand troops under his own command, he took the hill road leading from Madrid into the north. Through snow, which threatened at moments to engulf his army, he pushed on at lightning pace; in five days' marching he covered a hundred miles; and, fancying that the British were still clinging to their purpose, he considered them safely in the trap. But Moore had got wind of the approaching menace; his task was already accomplished, and he swiftly turned upon his tracks. At Corunna, on the northwest coast, supplies and transports were awaiting him; and without more ado he swung round and began retreating for dear life to this new base. It was not a moment too soon; and, even as things were, he came within an ace of being caught. Soult and Napoleon were both after him; and when he forded the river Elsa, now swollen with torrential rains and melted snow, he was barely thirty-six hours to the good. On the last day of the year he passed Astorga, and on the first day of 1809 the French entered on his heels. Here at last, however, Napoleon recognised his failure, and, himself retiring, left Soult to continue the chase. Outside Corunna Moore turned on his pursuers; and, though his troops' morale was sorely shaken by the horrors of the march, they flung back the enemy with heavy loss. Moore¹ himself fell mortally wounded in the battle; but before he died, he knew the French were beaten and that his own army would undoubtedly be able to make good their escape by sea.

Talavera and Torres Vedras.—Moore's stroke had given Spain some respite; but with the winter months the process of French conquest was gradually resumed; and when, in the late spring of 1809, Wellington himself returned to Lisbon, he found the enemy closing in on Portugal from every side. The counter blow which he now undertook to deliver was directed towards Madrid, straight up the Tagus valley, one of the few routes by which it was possible to lead an army into Spain. A strong French force, under the Marshal Victor, was stationed in this valley; but, taking a large though undisciplined contingent of Spanish regulars along with him, Wellington moved out to the attack. He met Victor near the town of Talavera, more than half way to Madrid, and there gave battle on the 27th of July. Here, as throughout the war, the tactical formations adopted by the British and the French were of widely different types. The French made it their habit to attack in a

¹ For illustration, see Plate XIX, opp. page 502.

solid column, composed of nine, eighteen, or even twenty-four successive ranks, and intended to force its way, wedge-like, by sheer weight of brute numbers.¹ The British, on the other hand, whose tactics were usually defensive, were drawn out in a long thin line, as a rule but two ranks deep. The wider extension of their front gave them the great advantage of an outflanking fire; and skilful choice of ground (in which Wellington was an adept) enabled them by the discharge of rapid volleys to contain the enemy's rush. Their position at Talavera was admirably selected. Wellington's troops stretched well across the valley, resting their left flank on some rising ground; the Spanish force, however, on which they depended for the support of their right wing, proved a very broken reed, and its cantankerous old general, Don Gregorio Cuesta, did his best to lose the battle. Luckily the French, instead of pressing their assault upon this vital flank, directed their chief onslaught against the British lines, and broke themselves against the hill on which it stood. It was the hardest-fought fight, so Wellington declared, known within modern times. All through two days the issue hung in the balance. The hill was taken and retaken. Attacks and counter-attacks followed in quick succession; and, even when night fell, the French continued to push forward through the darkness. On the third morning "King" Joseph, who was present in person at the battle, called off his shattered troops and began a retreat in the direction of Madrid. But, though master of the field, Wellington could make no further use of his advantage, as Soult was threatening the Tagus valley in his rear; and, barely in time, he fell back on Portugal once more.

The Turn of the Tide.—With this retirement the British strategy enters its second phase. England's handful of troops had drawn the enemy—drawn him with a vengeance. Her task now was to keep him occupied. All that winter, and on into next spring, Wellington played his favourite game of a vigorous defensive, as few but he could play it. And, sure enough, Napoleon fell into the trap. Sending off Soult to terrorise the south, he selected Massena as his most capable commander, picked out his choicest troops, and about mid-summer of 1810 loosed them upon Portugal with orders to "drive the British leopard into the sea." But Wellington was ready with his plan—a plan of which Massena had as yet no inkling. As the enemy marched against him down the northeast road, he at first fell slowly back, then, picking his position carefully, turned to give battle at Busaco. The bulk of the British troops were skilfully concealed behind a swell of rising ground, and the French storming the hill in reckless confidence lost four men killed and wounded to every Englishman. Then again Wellington fell back; and Massena, again pressing on in hot pursuit, found himself suddenly in a desert. The inhabitants had been removed, wholesale;

¹ The reason why the French adopted this formation was because the raw troops raised at the outset of the Revolution could only hope for success by mass tactics. Why, when better trained, Napoleon did not form them in line, remains something of a mystery.

the live-stock had disappeared; the farmyards stood empty; even the crops had been destroyed. And the French army, which counted as usual on supporting life upon the country-side, was soon reduced to the shortest of short commons. Still Wellington fell back, and still Massena followed, until, when a point was reached some twenty miles from Lisbon, he realised at last the nature of the British stratagem. The town of Lisbon lies at the southern tip of a broad peninsula, flanked upon one side by the Tagus estuary and on the other by the sea. Here for six months past the British engineers had been at work, and with the assistance of the local peasantry had constructed a triple line of stout defences. No pains had been spared to make the lines complete. At weak points stone walls were built over thirty feet in height. Whole woods had been felled to furnish barricades; roads had been broken up and rivers dammed. Yet to the French the very existence of these celebrated Lines of Torres Vedras came as an utter surprise. On the peninsula behind them Wellington's men now settled down securely, fed by the port of Lisbon at their back and ready to rally quickly to any threatened point. The French on the other hand were in a quandary. They could hope to make but small impression on these formidable works; yet to retreat they dared not. So they sat down doggedly to await further reinforcements. For six whole weeks they waited, enduring a slow starvation. Foraging parties were sent back to scour the country in their rear; but these returned as often as not with empty hands; and, under the stress of famine, deserters crossed in large numbers to the British lines. It was a hopeless struggle, not so much with man as with human nature itself. For a while Massena kept his hungry soldiers wonderfully in hand; but in the middle of November he accepted the inevitable and fell back again towards Spain.

So the third phase begins. The tide has turned; and the hour has at length arrived for the advance. From now until the day when the French armies were driven finally from Spain, it took just on three years; but they were years of continuous, though at first of painful, progress; and from the spring of 1811 Wellington was the attacker rather than the attacked. This change was due in the main to two new factors, both of which, as time went on, became more and more decisive. In the first place, the French energy began to flag. Their men were stale and sick with deferred hope. Their effort under Soult, though it overran the south, had been definitely checked before Cadiz. The peasants still waged a truceless war on their communications; and the task before them appeared interminable. As for Napoleon himself, he had lost interest in a struggle of which he had long since relinquished personal command. Wars in Central Europe (of which more shall be said soon) had distracted his attention; and now, in 1811, the colossal project of invading Russia had caused him to withdraw his best regiments from Spain. On the other hand, the troops at Wellington's command were increasing and improving. The Portuguese army, led and trained by that great Irish soldier, Viscount Beresford, was now

in excellent trim. The Spanish regulars were numerous; and the old cause of friction was permanently removed when in 1812 Wellington was given the command-in-chief of the whole allied army. Unhappily, however, though the home authorities were now giving him a far more vigorous backing, actual reinforcements from England were still few and far between; and, since the French had still three hundred thousand men in the peninsula, the task ahead of Wellington was anything but easy. Skilful strategy alone enabled him to triumph in the end. Possessing as he did the "interior lines," he could strike out from Portugal at his own chosen point; and, by a clever disposition of his commissariat depots, he maintained a freedom of action and a bold initiative, which the French were no longer in a position to resist.

Badajoz and Invasion of Spain.—When, at the end of the year 1810, the enemy fell back from the Torres Vedras lines, success seemed still far distant. Though Portugal indeed was saved, England's main task of driving the enemy from the Peninsula was as yet untouched; and the very keys of entry into Spain still rested in French hands. There were but two roads, worthy of that name, which led across the frontier out of Portugal, one north of the Tagus valley and one south. The northern of these routes was covered by two towns, Almeida and the frontier fortress Ciudad Roderigo. The southern route was covered equally by the fort of Badajoz; and, before Wellington could hope to strike an effective blow for Spain's recovery, the recapture of these formidable barrier posts was an essential step. In 1811, therefore, we find him hammering at Almeida gates. Massena attacks him at Fuentes d'Onoro; is beaten back; and soon Almeida falls. Roderigo, however, is left unreduced. Meanwhile, at Badajoz, a mixed army of allies under Beresford's command is making a similar attempt. Soult comes to the town's relief; and, after a bloody fight at Albuera, in which the British contingent lost a third of its whole number, Soult too is driven back. But, like Roderigo, Badajoz does not fall—this year at least.

Better results were awaiting Wellington's endeavours in 1812. He did not wait on time. In the first days of the new year—under strange campaigning weather—he pounced down on Roderigo and, before French reinforcements could appear from winter quarters, took it by fierce assault. Then, making a feint of entry into Spain, he slipped south across the Tagus and fell on Badajoz. To take this second fortress before relief could come, seemed a mad hope; but by desperate fighting Wellington achieved it. In those days the usual method of assault was first to work forward by a system of zig-zag trenches, then, when the guns had rent a breach in the town-walls, to charge home with the bayonet. All this was normally a lengthy business; but at Badajoz, where the attack of a relief-force was momentarily expected, there was not a moment to be lost; and, after less than two weeks' bombardment, Wellington sent his men against the breach. Owing to lack of ammunition, the British guns gave out an hour or so too soon; and the French had time, before the assault came, to patch the broken gaps in their

defences with sword-blades fixed in beams and other devilish devices. The result was that, when shortly before midnight the English infantry swept up into the breaches, they found themselves caught in a veritable death-trap. They stumbled and were maimed upon the sword-blades; they were mown down by the defenders' musket fire; they were blown into the air by mines and hand-grenades; and, though they stuck grimly to their midnight work, they could make no headway whatsoever. Of the attacks delivered at five separate points, four failed to gain a hold. But, by a wonderful audacity, the party dispatched against the castle climbed up by ladders and finally obtained a footing within the walls. The French, taken in the rear, gave up the fight; and Badajoz was Britain's. The carnage at the untaken breaches had been terrible, costing England first and last a full five thousand men. But it was worth the cost; for Wellington now held the keys of entry into Spain.

Wellington did not reap at once the full fruits of his success; but in the year of Badajoz's capture he gave the French a taste of what was coming. As spring turned to summer, he struck out northeast at Salamanca, the enemy's chief store-depot in Upper Spain. A great pitched battle followed, and the greatest so far of British victories was won. Madrid was entered; and for a moment it appeared as though the hour of final triumph had arrived. But, though he pressed on to Burgos, up the Bayonne road, that was the furthest point attained by Wellington this year. French armies were collecting to the town's relief, and he fell back on the Portuguese frontier for the winter months. The next year's strategy was better planned. Wellington had now at his disposal by far the largest force he had yet commanded, over 60,000 Spanish and 75,000 British and Portuguese; and, though the French still had some 200,000 men in their various scattered armies, England was soon to fight a battle in which for the first time the superiority of numbers was upon her side. The enemy had evacuated southern Spain during the winter; and, falling back upon their communications with Bayonne, their main forces were stretched in a wide line between the Elsa and Madrid, when at the end of May Wellington moved out. They soon became aware, however, that the force in front of them was not the only force which they must fear. An English contingent had been shipped round to the north Spanish coast; and, when this threatened to take them in the rearward flank, the French hurriedly fell back. Wellington pursued, caught them, as they turned at bay, before Vittoria, and, after a crushing victory, hunted their broken rabble to the gates of the Pyrenees. Spain was delivered; it was now the turn of France. In the spring of 1814 the British pressed hard against Bayonne, threatened Bordeaux, and on the 10th of April beat Soult out of Toulouse. But, unknown to Wellington, the war was already over. Four days earlier, upon the 6th of April, Napoleon had surrendered his crown.

III

Napoleon's Madness.—"Whom the gods seek to ruin, they first drive mad." While the war in Spain was raging, Napoleon's plans for the domination of all Europe had grown more and more fantastic, and in his efforts to enforce the "Continental System" he cast all common prudence to the winds. It would be idle to deny that Napoleon was a statesman. He found leisure amid the stress and turmoil of his wars to remodel the institutions of his country, and to lay the foundations so truly and so deep that they have stood the long test of time. The main part of the French educational system is of his workmanship. His legislative reforms—the Code Napoléon—are still the very basis of French law. All threads of government and administration were knit up into his hands, and, with that passion for unity and centralised authority which marked the old Roman Cæsars, he strove to make, not merely France alone, but the whole of Europe, pivot upon himself. Yet the strange thing is that this great architect of Empire, with his portentous grasp of detail, his matchless powers of rapid organisation, his clear conception of the fundamental principles of government, lacked a real understanding of the minds of ordinary men. He made the fatal blunder, by no means rare in genius, of despising them. He trampled on their most cherished sentiments, flouted their national traditions, as though such things were of no consequence, and as though people had no past. And, having failed to gauge the depth of human prejudice and passion, he awoke too late to discover his mistake. Drunk with a power already swollen beyond measure, he reached out his hand continually for more, and nothing was so sacred or so time-hallowed as to be inviolate. When in 1809 he seized possession of the Papal States in Italy, nothing much was said; but, when he proceeded further to punish the Pope's resistance by putting him in prison, Europe shuddered at the monstrous impiety. Yet there was another force more powerful and perhaps more permanent than even the Roman Catholic Church itself, which Napoleon in his folly insulted and ignored—men's natural love of freedom. In Spain we have already seen how this great force had upset his calculations; and in other countries it was to do the same. Austria and Prussia were in no true sense nations before Napoleon came, but, when he tampered with their independence, they learnt to value it as they had never valued it before; and, while these two peoples were planning to strike a blow for their deliverance, Napoleon made another blunder and a new discovery. He discovered that even in Russia peasants loved their home and that a Cossack's patriotism could, if challenged, be as staunch and tenacious as a Frenchman's.

Moscow and Leipsic.—Picture Napoleon then in 1809, still intent on starving England and, with this purpose still foremost in his mind, holding Europe down by an almost superhuman exertion of authority. In the spring of that year, soon after his failure to catch the British

at Corunna, opposition begins first to raise a timid head. Austria gathers her armies and flings down the challenge. The blow falls swiftly, and, beaten once more at Wagram, Austria retires again into her shell to meditate revenge. Prussia meanwhile is stirring silently under the humiliating terms which Napoleon has imposed; her army is limited to forty thousand men; but Scharnhorst, her war minister, while obeying it in the letter, evades the spirit of the law, passing forty thousand young men at a time through a short-service course and so providing the country with an unlimited supply of trained reservists. Patriots and poets are meantime preaching a crusade for liberty. The material of revolt is ready, and Prussia bides her chance. Careless or ignorant of this growing spirit of unrest, Napoleon holds upon his course, resolute above all against any weakening in the blockade of England.

Now, of all the European countries which suffered from this interference in their trade, the most resentful—and rightly so—was Russia. Russia had everything to lose and nothing to gain by the defeat of England, and, though still bound to Napoleon by the Treaty of Tilsit, the Tsar from a lukewarm ally soon became a secret foe. Finally, in 1811, he put down his foot and refused to close his ports to neutral shipping at Napoleon's request; and with that Napoleon determined upon war. There is no more dramatic event in modern history than the campaign of Moscow; and the complete and sudden ruin which the invader suffered is enhanced tenfold by the tremendous character of his designs. He gathered an army 600,000 strong, drawing off the pick of his troops from other theatres. Nothing on the same scale had been previously attempted; and his preparations were so abnormally prolonged that it was not until the late June of 1812 that the Grande Armée, with Napoleon at its head, set foot on Russian soil. The Russians fell back before its advance, leaving the country desert as they went. Progress was slow, and Napoleon soon found himself battling not so much with men as with the mud. At last, at Borodino, nearly 500 miles from the frontier, the Russians turned to fight. They were beaten, as was natural, but the carnage was appalling, and Napoleon for his part lost forty thousand men; yet he pressed on to take Moscow, thinking its capture would terminate the war. Fatal illusion; for, when he reached the old capital, the fruit of his imagined victory turned to ashes in his hand. The place was empty. The Tsar, the garrison, even the inhabitants had disappeared. Next evening unseen hands set fire to various buildings. Moscow burned for five whole days, and was left a gutted shell, hardly a fit place even to quarter troops.

It was now that Napoleon committed his most grievous blunder, for, fancying that the Russians might still be brought to terms, he lingered on. Little did he know the Russian character, still less the Russian climate. On the 7th of November came the first winter frost. On the 16th the thermometer sank to below zero, and the roads became a sheet of slippery ice. Awaking to his peril, Napoleon now ordered the retreat and the tragedy began. Food was growing scarce, the horse

transport was useless, and hordes of Cossacks hung perpetually upon the flank. At the river Beresina they broke down the bridge and prepared to dispute the passage. After a fierce fight, however, the French forced their way across, and the retreat continued through deep snow and blinding blizzards, covered the while by the heroic rear-guard under Marshal Ney. But it was now less an army than a rabble that retreated. Thousands were left dead in the snow-drifts. Stragglers never rejoined. Two-thirds, perhaps, of the whole number perished on the route, and, while the starving remnant was still battling through the snows, Napoleon fled and left them to their fate. Once back in Paris, he was still able to rally the despondent people by the magic of his presence. There was fight left in old France yet; but the "Grande Armée," the very flower of her manhood, had ceased to exist.

Napoleon had sowed the wind, and he was now to reap the whirlwind. Outraged Europe turned bodily against him; enemies appeared on every hand; and, in countries which but recently had seemed his peaceful allies, armies sprang, as though by magic, from the soil. Prussia was up at once and joined with Russia; soon after Austria, Sweden, and other lesser powers united with these and England in a final coalition, pledging themselves to make no separate peace till France had been overcome. Napoleon's doom seemed sealed. After waging continuous war for over twenty years, after raising army upon army, first for the defence of the Revolution, and then to provide material for the Emperor's own campaigns, France was utterly exhausted. Her funds were drained, and she had no more men. Yet, spurring his countrymen to a last frantic effort Napoleon raised an army of mere boys, and with these new troops behind him he re-crossed the Rhine. The battle which was to decide the fate of Europe took place at Leipsic in western Saxony. In this, the "Battle of the Nations," Napoleon was outnumbered by nearly two to one; yet he held out even against such odds for the best part of three days. The issue, however, left him no further hope. Falling back into France, he fought even now a campaign which was a masterpiece of defensive strategy; attempted, it is said, to take his life by poison; and on 6th April, as we have seen already, was compelled to surrender his crown. His place was to be filled by a member of the old Bourbon dynasty, the brother of Louis XVI; and he himself was banished into honourable exile in the little Mediterranean island of Elba. So all was over. "Farewell, my children," he said, at parting, to the men of his "Old Guard." "Comrades, farewell. Forget me not. Forget me not." Ten months later, almost to a day, the time came for them to prove that they remembered.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HUNDRED DAYS

I

At the great Allied Congress gathered in Vienna, where their time was pretty evenly divided between revising the map of Europe to the detriment of France and quarrelling (as allies will) with one another, the representatives of the victorious Powers were rudely shocked in the spring of 1815 by an unpleasant piece of news. Napoleon, whom they fondly imagined to be safely stowed in Elba, had landed—so report had it—on the coast of southern France, and was even then marching upon Paris. And the worst of it was that the news was true. Napoleon was indeed at large again. On the first day of March he had disembarked at Fréjus with a bodyguard about a thousand strong all told. It had been touch and go at first whether the men of his old armies would hail him as their captain or arrest him as a traitor to the new Bourbon King. A battalion of these troops was ordered out to bar his passage in the south. Napoleon had advanced up to their bayonet points. “Soldiers,” he said, “do you not know your general? If there is one among you who desires to kill his Emperor, let him do it now.” The words snapped the spell of authority which bound them; and the next moment the men were giving the Emperor a resounding cheer. A fortnight later Napoleon had entered Paris unopposed. The Bourbon King had fled; and the Corsican adventurer was once more lord of France. By June he had between two and three hundred thousand soldiers at his call, of whom 120,000 were ready for action on the Belgian front. Meantime the Vienna Congress had acted with decision. They hurried their armies to the Netherlands with all the speed they might. Wellington with 100,000 of mixed British, Belgian, and Hanoverian troops concentrated at Brussels. Blücher with 150,000 Prussians moved from the Lower Rhine to join him. Even alone these two contingents seemed more than enough to cope with Napoleon’s levy. But they were little more, it must be remembered, than a vanguard or first instalment of the Allies’ strength. The campaign now about to be waged was, therefore, in no real sense a final or decisive test. Had Napoleon won it, there remained immense reserves of men in Europe which would still have been available to take the field against him; and, even though the day at Waterloo should have gone wholly in his favour, Napoleon could scarcely have recovered his old ascendancy. Somewhere, sooner or later, he was bound to meet his match.

II

Napoleon’s Strategy.—Whether or no Napoleon would have been well-advised to wait and allow the allied armies to attack him is not a

matter of much consequence. His command over France was still far too precarious to admit of such a course. Rapid victory was essential to success; and for political no less than for military reasons he took the offensive as soon as ever he was ready to march north. Yet he had good ground for hope. Fortune seemed at the moment to smile on him once more. Though their discipline was not what it had been, his men were for the most part seasoned veterans. His opponents, and more especially the British, were largely dependent upon raw recruits. Then again, though his forces were numerically inferior, he possessed the great strategical advantage of interior lines. Owing to the necessity of covering the frontier into Belgium, the allied troops were strung

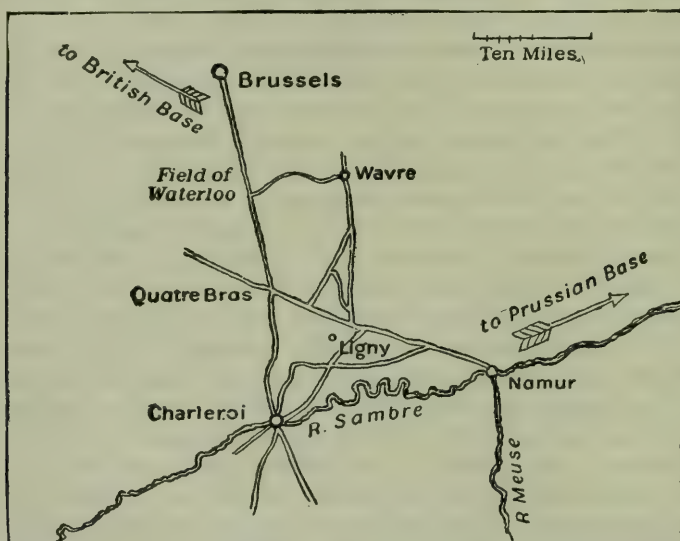


FIG. 47.—THE CAMPAIGN OF WATERLOO.

out over a long line. Wellington and Blücher were, moreover, forced to operate from widely distant and divergent bases, the one from Brussels and the northwest Belgian ports, the other from Namur and the east. Napoleon's hope lay, therefore, in attacking and crushing each of them in turn, and, when he succeeded on 15th June in effecting his passage of the river Sambre at Charleroi, all seemed to favour this bold plan. With his usual faculty for quick decision—and for rapid execution even more—he proposed to deal a right-hand blow at Blücher on his east; and, this done, to turn and settle accounts with Wellington at leisure. Of such a plan the allied generals had no inkling. On the very night when Napoleon had crossed the Sambre not thirty miles away, Wellington attended at a ball in Brussels, so utterly unconscious was he of his peril. Yet the peril was obvious, the plan incontestably correct. It lagged but a trifle in the execution, or a very different issue would have followed. But that trifle was enough to mar it all. In dealing

his blow at Blücher, Napoleon failed to effect complete annihilation; and Blücher's army, retiring to the north, survived to fight another day—on the field of Waterloo.

Ligny and Quatre Bras.—On the morning, then, of Friday, the 16th of June, we must picture the disposition of the three actors in the drama much as follows: In and around Brussels is Wellington's scattered army of a hundred thousand men. Southwest of Wellington are Blücher's forces about half as large again, of which some eighty thousand are rapidly concentrating upon Ligny village. At Charleroi, not ten miles to the southwest of Ligny, lies Napoleon's army, 120,000 strong, larger, that is, than Wellington's, but less than Blücher's. That day Napoleon strikes. He sends Ney forward up the great highway towards Brussels to seize the Quatre Bras cross-roads, and there to hold in play any British regiments arriving by this route—the only route by which they could reach Ligny. Himself he turns on Blücher's Prussians awaiting him at Ligny, and hurls against them the better part of his remaining strength. Blücher's position was ill-chosen; and, as Wellington predicted when he saw it on the morning of the fight, the Prussians were "damnably mauled" by the French artillery. Blücher's men, none the less, stuck manfully to their defence. Charge and counter-charge ran fiercely through the long afternoon. Villages were taken and retaken; and four o'clock found Napoleon still hammering at Ligny and still held. Yet he was within a touch of victory. A few more troops to throw into the balance, and it seemed a moral certainty that the Prussian line must break. Napoleon, therefore, had dispatched one message and he now dispatched a second, urging Ney to send across reinforcements from Quatre Bras. This, however, was more easily said than done. There, too, there had been fighting, though of a less desperate sort. The Quatre Bras cross-roads had been originally but lightly held by Wellington's advance guard; and, acting with decent speed, Ney might well have carried them without much opposition. But Ney's movements had been unaccountably delayed. His marching orders were not given him till halfway through the morning, and it was well past noon before he was able to deliver his attack. By then it was too late. For, almost as soon as Ney entered upon action, Wellington's advance guard received succour from the rear. British regiments were beginning to filter down along the road from Brussels; and, as Ney warmed to his work, he found the numbers opposed to him slowly but steadily increasing. By four o'clock, therefore, he too had made but little real impression; and he too was looking for reinforcements at his need.

Now, among the French troops assigned to Ney's command was a corps twenty thousand strong, and led by d'Erlon. Thanks to the late start which had been made that morning this corps had lagged behind, and was still, in mid-afternoon, some distance from Quatre Bras. With growing impatience Ney looked for its arrival. He sent out peremptory orders to accelerate its pace; but still it did not come. The

fact was that, while on the march, d'Erlon had fallen in with Napoleon's message calling for help at Ligny. Interpreting the message which was meant for Ney as a summons to himself, d'Erlon had suspended his advance towards Quatre Bras and had struck out east across country to Napoleon's aid. When news of this reached Ney, he broke into a fury and sent a fresh and still more vigorous message to recall the wanderer. Ney was, after all, d'Erlon's immediate chief; the order left no loophole for evasion; so on receipt of it d'Erlon turned once more upon his tracks and resumed his tardy progress towards Quatre Bras. But the twofold muddle was now past remedy. The harm was done. Having spent the afternoon in wandering to and fro between the armies, d'Erlon's corps ended by benefiting neither. Disappointed of its aid, Ney not only failed to carry the cross-roads, but towards evening was actually falling back towards the rear. Napoleon, for his part, did indeed achieve one half of his intention. By a prodigious effort he threw Blücher out of Ligny and rolled up the Prussian line in utter rout. But night was closing in. Dark, thunder-clouds obscured the failing light. It was impossible at such an hour to press the victory home; thus, though heavily defeated, Blücher's army was not by any means destroyed, and, if Napoleon imagined that his main purpose was accomplished, he was grievously in error. Forty-eight hours later, on the Sunday afternoon, he was to learn to his bitter cost that the Prussians could still fight.

Grouchy's Error.—Already there has appeared in the conduct of Napoleon's strategy—in the delay about giving Ney his marching orders, in the grievous bungle over d'Erlon's corps—enough to give the impression of an uncertainty and error altogether unfamiliar to it in the past. Something was clearly wrong; but what this was it is not so easy to determine. Some critics would have it that the staff-work was at fault, and that in the rapid organisation for this last campaign there had not been time to select efficient officers, or to restore to the army's leadership its old-time temper and cohesion. Others would make out that Napoleon himself was principally to blame, and that the self-confident habit of his later years caused him to concentrate the direction of affairs too much in his own hands. Others again would set all down to physical debility, maintaining that the alert and vigorous brain which planned Austerlitz and Jena was already dulled by the advance of years, and that his growing corpulence had predisposed him to a certain laxity of grip and loss of accurate judgment. However this may be, it is certain that during these days Napoleon blundered, as he had seldom done before; and now on the morrow of Ligny he fell into a very grave miscalculation. Alive to the necessity of following up the Prussians who had escaped him overnight, he sent off his Marshal Grouchy in pursuit. Most unwisely, however, he jumped to the conclusion that the Prussian retreat was directed on Namur; and it was towards Namur accordingly that Grouchy sought them.

Now, upon the morning of the battle Wellington had ridden over

to Ligny to confer with Blücher. What precisely passed between them it is difficult to ascertain; but on one point they pretty clearly reached a mutual understanding, and it was this, that, if either were defeated, he should make it his object at all hazards to keep in touch with the other. Then came the battle in which Blücher had been beaten; but, though beaten, he had retained his full liberty of movement; and instead of retiring east towards their base (as Napoleon had imagined) the Prussians had marched almost due north. All Saturday they were in movement up the road to Wavre, and by nightfall they were safely collected round about that town—not eight miles distant, as the crow flies, from Waterloo. Meanwhile, in accordance with instructions, Grouchy was away on his wild-goose chase towards Namur. The capture of some stragglers on the road confirmed him in his erroneous calculation. It was not in fact till late on Saturday night that he realised the truth; and thus, while he was ponderously reconsidering his plans and demanding further instructions from Napoleon, the elusive Prussian army had recovered touch with Wellington and was marching to turn the scales of victory at Waterloo.

III

Waterloo.—Waterloo was already marked out as the scene of the coming combat between the British and French forces. Throughout the Saturday, while Blücher was retreating upon Wavre, there had been much movement up the Charleroi-Brussels road. Early in the morning Wellington had discovered (what he had not known the previous night) that the Prussian army was retiring after a severe defeat. His advanced troops at Quatre Bras were thus placed in dangerous isolation, and he determined to withdraw them further north. Halfway to Brussels he halted them upon a long low swell of ground, known after a neighbouring hamlet as the ridge of Mont St. Jean. This ridge Wellington's trained eye had long before selected as an ideal position for a defensive fight. It overlooked—not steeply, indeed, but down a smooth slope of dropping ground—the shallow valley or depression across which the French troops advancing upon Brussels must inevitably pass. To its front there lay two farmsteads, La Haye Sainte and Hougomont, which if held, would serve as breakwaters or outposts against the enemy's assault. Behind it the ground dropped slightly once again, thus affording valuable shelter, where the reserves might marshal or manœuvre out of sight. Such then was the position—incomparable for the purposes of the Duke's strategy—in which under drenching rain his forces made their bivouac on the Saturday night. Hougomont was occupied and strengthened by the Guards. La Haye Sainte, unluckily assigned to the young Prince of Orange, was less well fortified. Behind the farms Wellington's main force, some seventy thousand strong, was disposed along the ridge, British and foreign regiments much intermixed, but the British reserved upon the whole for last emergencies, and the foreign

troops thrust forward along the convenient line of a sunk lane. Seeing how crucial was the defence of the right wing, behind which lay British communications with the sea, a Netherlander force was thrown out westwards at some considerable distance from the field. Thus posted, Wellington awaited the attack; and he had to wait some time. Napoleon was in no hurry. The ground was soaking wet; and, counting to win the battle in the afternoon, he gave it time to dry. That miscalculation was to cost him dear.

First Phase.—It was about mid-day when he delivered his first blow—a smart thrust at Hougomont upon the left. There was a fierce tussle at short range around the farmyard gates; but the assault was

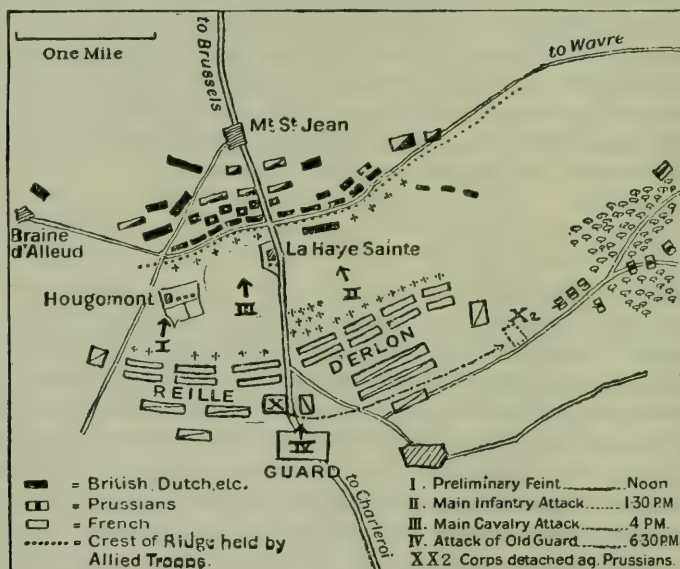


FIG. 48.—THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

beaten back, and its purpose—to draw away reinforcements from the centre of the British line—was definitely foiled. At one o'clock, a massed battery of eighty guns began a bombardment of the main English position; and half-an-hour later the corps of d'Erlon, unused in the fighting of two days before, was sent up the slope to the right of La Haye Sainte. Though the garrison of the farm withstood the shock, French troops swept up past it and drove in the Belgian troops of the first line. The position was critical; but a British brigade behind them filled the gap; and, as the enemy recoiled, some squadrons of English cavalry, the Life Guards and Dragoons, were let loose from behind the ridge. Caught up in their onrush, a Highland regiment raced with them side by side, the men clinging as best they could to stirrup-straps. Together they swept back the French infantry in tumult, brushed aside a counter-charge of horse, and, reaching even as far as the great battery, sabred

many of its gunners where they stood. Then there came a lull in the fighting. It was well past three o'clock. The first grand assault had definitely failed; and already Napoleon had news that enemy troops were moving far away upon his eastern flank. It was Blücher and his Prussians. There was little time to lose.

Second Phase.—About four began the second phase of the great fight—a renewal of the attempt to break the centre of the British line. La Haye Sainte farm was again assaulted, and in vain. Again the guns spoke out, doing terrible havoc on the ridge. But the principal effort of this second phase was the charge of the French horse. Ney, somehow deluded into the idea that the English were weakening, ordered out the cavalry en masse. It was a reckless stroke; and, as he saw the five thousand mounted men moving in close ranks up the opposing ridge, Napoleon realised that once again his marshal's impetuosity had played him false.¹ For the British troops, however much they had suffered from the guns, were very far from weakening; and, when they saw the cavalry approach, they both knew their cue and took it. The infantry formed quickly into hollow squares, dotted chequer-wise along the ridge. The gunners fired their last charge at point-blank range, then left their guns and retreated to the shelter of the squares; and, as the French cuirassiers, chasseurs, and lancers came plunging heavily along, volley after volley from the British muskets thinned and confused their ranks. Bayonets were ready when the musket fire gave out; and, though the French horsemen rode round the squares and past the squares, they could find no means to break them. The cavalry of the Guard was sent up to join the rest. Backward and forward the charges flowed and ebbed like "sea water among rocks"; yet, like rocks, though sorely battered, the British squares stood firm. By six o'clock the second effort, too, had ended in failure, as the first had done; and already the Prussians were beginning to close in.

Last Phase.—But now to the French there came a momentary success—slight in itself, yet sufficient to tempt Napoleon to a last desperate throw. About six o'clock the farm of La Haye Sainte was carried, its garrison was overpowered, the place itself was in flames, and, with this obstacle removed, the British front was doubly open to the French attack. Napoleon, snatching at a straw, called out his last reserve—the Imperial Guard, which had hitherto lain inactive during the whole day. The new thrust was to be delivered between La Haye Sainte and Hougomont; and there was still some chance, though not a great one, that it might even now succeed.

The sun was low towards setting as the Old Guard took the hill. Veterans to a man, they never flinched as they went up under the shower of grape; and, as column after column broke savagely against the British

¹ On the other hand, it is by no means certain that Ney gave the order, or indeed whether it was given at all. The whole affair may have arisen from some misunderstanding of the cavalry commanders. In any case, if Napoleon disapproved of it, it was not beyond his power to stop the movement at the outset.

line, the affair looked critical. Foreseeing the shock, Wellington had brought forward the last of his reserves from behind the shelter of the ridge. He even recalled the Belgian contingent which he had sent out to guard his flank. For all that, there came a moment when all might have been lost; and it was then that an English officer named Colborne, acting on his own initiative, performed a daring feat, which, had it failed, might have meant the breaking of the line, but which in the event proved brilliantly decisive. What Colborne did was this: he swung out his regiment at right angles to the front, a manœuvre which left a perilous gap in the English line, but which enabled him to sweep the flank of the French column with a murderous cross-fire. It was the work of a moment. The French took no advantage of the yawning gap; but, caught under the volleys from this unexpected quarter, they staggered and recoiled. Wellington caught the tide of victory at its full flood. As the broken ranks of the French Guard went down the hill, he gave a general order for advance; and all along the line the British troops pressed after them in hot pursuit. Almost at the same moment, the Prussian army burst in upon the battle from the east. Late though he was, Blücher had kept his tryst. His troops had been upon the march since morning; but the muddy lanes had made progress slow and painful. One of his corps had come from many miles the farther side of Wavre; and, though Wellington was expecting him by two o'clock, the wonder is that they arrived as early as they did. By four o'clock the first of them were actually debouching from the forests upon Napoleon's east. The containing force, sent out to keep them back, was for a while successful. But in the last hour before sunset, when the Old Guard took the hill, their pressure grew with the increasing weight of numbers, and could not any longer be denied. Even as the Old Guard was falling back before the forward sweep of the whole English line, the Prussian columns crashed into their flank. The sun went down and the moon rose over a scene of indescribable confusion. The French were racing for safety to the crossings of the Sambre; and down the long road through Quatre Bras and on to Charleroi the allied cavalry hunted them through the night. No rally was possible; and only a remnant of some thirty thousand men ever reached the river-side.

IV

The Sequel.—So all was over.—The brief flutter of the Hundred days ended with the occupation of Paris by the allied armies, a second restoration of the Bourbon King, and the confinement of Bonaparte himself on the rock of St. Helena, where he spent his six remaining years of life in compiling his memoirs and querulously explaining the causes of his *débâcle*. The Congress of Allied States took up again its interrupted labours and its task of rearranging the European map. France, shorn of her conquests, was cut down to the frontier of pre-Revolution days. Holland and Belgium were knit together into one.

Napoleon's confederation of the German States was converted into a perpetual league. Venice and Lombardy went back to Austria. Russia took a generous share of Poland, Prussia of Saxony, while England got Malta and (what proved more valuable) the Cape. Yet such trifling readjustments are no index of the true meaning of the Allies' victory. It meant, first of all, that the century-long duel between England and France had been settled finally for good and all. Henceforth London, and not Paris, was to lead the world, and the fruits of colonial empire in far-off continents were definitely secured to England upon the field of Waterloo. Yet France's downfall meant much more than this. It meant the defeat—temporary perhaps, but none the less conclusive—of a new ideal. In the Revolution had been born a spirit which defied the accepted canons of old-world politics, a spirit which had claimed for a long-suffering people the right to manage their country for themselves, and to have done with the hollow privilege of aristocracies and kings. At the voice of the Revolution the world's governors had trembled, doubting their own security of power, and in the defeat of France they recognised the instrument of their salvation, fancying that the new spirit of democracy could now easily be crushed. So the triumph which rescued Europe from Napoleon's tyranny served also to smother among many peoples the new-born hope of a freer, happier world. The true child of the Vienna Congress was not liberty and progress, but a compact binding the monarchs of the victorious powers to uphold the established order of the past and suppress all dangerous tendency towards democratic change. The "Holy Alliance," as the authors of the compact christened it, was designed, not merely to undo what France had done, but to make mankind forget, if possible, that it had been done at all.

CHAPTER XVIII

ENGLAND DURING THE WAR

During the period of great wars civilian history must take inevitably a second place. Doings at the battle-front monopolize the focus of our vision, and while we admire the tragic heroisms of Waterloo or Talavera or Trafalgar, it is often difficult to remember that the men who fought there were but a tiny fraction of the whole community. Nevertheless the strain of a long campaign is not borne exclusively by soldiers, and its ultimate effects are felt perhaps most strongly by the folk who stay at home. In this the Napoleonic war was no exception. Not merely was it a time of great anxiety and stress for England, it was also a period of great change. The whole condition of the people went, as it were, into the melting-pot, and the England that emerged when Waterloo was over was a very different place from the England of 1789.

Industrial Progress.—One strange result of the war was an enormous and unprecedented increase in the volume of England's trade—yet not so strange, perhaps, when we consider closely. During these years her sea supremacy had grown complete, and her continental rivals, already weakened or exhausted by the drain on purse and man-power, were shut out from foreign traffic by a rigorous maritime blockade. Thus raw materials which might have gone to their ports went to England, and markets which had previously absorbed their manufactures looked now to England instead. It was a lucky accident for England to say the least of it, that, at the very moment when this new demand for manufactured goods arose, fate had equipped her with the means to meet it. The crop of mechanical devices, invented at the outset of King George's reign, was now coming to fruition. Mines were being properly exploited. Power-looms were working busily. The potteries were discovering a novel scope. In northern England the whole character of life and landscape was being rapidly transformed. Factory towns sprang up like mushrooms on the waste sides of Yorkshire moors, and "the hum of the workshops was heard in places which had previously been disturbed only by the whirr of the grouse." Trade boomed. Production was doubled, doubled again, and then redoubled. The iron-ore output, which in 1740 had reached the modest total of but 17,000 tons, was multiplied as much as twelve times over before the century's close. Even more remarkable was the development in cotton, which, not so long before, had been well-nigh suppressed in the wool interest. Now the raw stuff poured in by ship-loads; the mills were set working at high pressure; in the fifteen years preceding Waterloo the number of hands employed was actually doubled, and the value of cotton goods sent out to foreign countries reached the then amazing total of seventeen million pounds. England, in short, had become the "workshop of the world," and not distant continents alone, but an exhausted Europe looked to her industries for their support. England owned the goods; she owned the ships to carry them; and the war's plain result was to make her merchants rich beyond their dreams. For every pound's worth they exported when the war began they were exporting four when it was over. Nor, while the British manufacturers and merchants were piling up their gains, did the British farmer prove a loser by the war. Napoleon's boycott did not succeed, as he intended, in starving England out, but it made her go uncomfortably short. The result was that every bushel of grain which could be grown was needed; land which had never previously been tilled was broken up for sowing, and even Dartmoor hillsides were brought under the plough. The farmers' efforts were abundantly repaid, for the price of grain soared up to heights unknown before. In the seventies and eighties a quarter of wheat had fetched roughly forty shillings. At the time of Trafalgar it was worth just twice as much, and at one point a little later it reached as high as 120 shillings. No wonder the farmer thrived, or that the landlord, with a quick eye to his advantage, raised the rents. The

“upper class” had nothing to complain of in the results of the Great War.

Plight of Poor.—But there is another side to the picture.—When wheat is selling at 120 shillings a quarter, it is a welcome windfall to the lucky man who grows it; but it means something like starvation to the poor man who lives on bread. Wages had not risen to meet the cost of food; and the working class soon felt the pinch of want to an almost intolerable degree. It had once been England’s boast that her village labourers were the best fed of any nation; but, under the pressure of these years, the standard of living sank to the lowest limits of a bare subsistence. Meat seldom entered the houses of the poor. Cheese was a luxury but rarely tasted; and one old man living about this time declared (so the tale goes) that a cold rice pudding, the gift of a rich neighbour, was the greatest treat that he could recollect. To many, in short, starvation was an ever-present terror; and, when the average labourer’s wage was but ten to fourteen shillings, the father of a family was often scarcely able to make both ends meet. Prices, already driven high enough by natural causes, were further increased by heavy war taxation; for the working-man, though exempt from tax on income, contributed largely through the excise and customs duties levied upon the things he had to buy. Thus, if he drank beer, the malt in it was taxed. If he drank tea or coffee, these imports were taxed too. He paid taxes equally if he bought soap, or salt, or sugar; and in one way or another nearly half his paltry earnings went to defray the national expenditure on war.

It is not strange that at times the working class grew restive, or that disturbances took place. At one moment even the women broke out into revolt; and we read of stalwarts in petticoats raiding the local flour-mill, boarding grain ships as they lay in harbour, and even forming associations to keep the price of butter down. In some districts there were more serious outbursts of male violence; and yeomanry were employed to suppress rioters and carry off the ring-leaders to prison. Such measures of repression were effectual, but they left a sore behind them; and it is only natural that the English masses began to ponder more seriously than ever the doings of revolutionary France. In “free” England, which was fighting, they were told, to save the world from Napoleon’s tyranny, the condition of the populace was hardly a good advertisement for the benefits of “freedom.” While the rich were growing richer and were adding every year to the comfort of their homes, the plight of the vast majority was growing steadily worse. The squires and gentry did little to relieve, nothing to cure, the prevalent distresses; nor were they even interested to see common justice done. On the contrary, so far as active measures were concerned, the “governing class” showed itself to be the worst enemy to freedom. No doubt they could justify their policies by pleading the necessities of war; and, when all is said, it was their obstinacy and resolution which brought the war through to its end. Nevertheless, the victory was bought at a great

price. For in the process they found it necessary to trample down the liberties of their own people; and, in a very different sense from that which we have mentioned, England was a changed country when the war was done.

The fact is that now, as so frequently in history, we find war affording a handle to the powers that be to draw the reins of their authority more tightly. The opportunity was exercised in two remarkable and separate ways, one bearing chiefly on the artisans of the industrial districts, the other affecting the agricultural population of the countryside; and we will discuss the former first. In the last quarter of the century the introduction of machinery had, as we have seen, produced a new type of worker. The old-fashioned handicraftsman was soon beaten in the race by his new competitor, the engine, which could turn out twenty or a hundred times his output at infinitely less cost. The handicraftsman did not yield, indeed, without a fight; he struggled on against the unequal odds; at times he even took to open violence, and broke up the machines which were fleching away the trade out of his hands. Nevertheless, it was a losing battle he was fighting; and, though he continued, in fact, to ply his trade for many years to come, the handicraftsman was obviously destined to die out.

Far more important, more numerous, and, in the eyes of the authorities, more dangerous were the growing mass of factory-workers who supplanted him. True, a large proportion of their number were women and young children who were ready to perform the unskilled duties of the factory at a lower wage than men. This gave the masters and mill-owners an obvious advantage; nor were they slow to take it. The greater part of them were self-made upstarts, who, having won their position by the sweat of their own brow, felt no qualms about exacting the same industry from others. They showed neither mercy nor consideration to their numerous employees. The workshops were foul, damp, and insanitary. The working-hours were intolerably long—fourteen, eighteen, and in some cases twenty hours a day. The pay, even for men, was miserably low, varying from ten to five-and-twenty shillings weekly; and fines were inflicted for the most trifling breach of workshop regulations—"for whistling, 1/-, for being found dirty, 1/-, for being sick and failing to find a substitute, 6/-," and so forth. It is impossible to exaggerate the sufferings of these folk. Their day was given over to a dull monotony of hopeless and unedifying toil; yet the short hours spent at home were scarcely less wretched. The cottages were over-crowded, bare, and comfortless. The family life was ruined by the grim necessity of sending out the children to earn wages almost as soon as ever they could walk. The only pastimes were of a brutalising sort, cock-fights, boxing contests, and the like. Education there was none; and, in short, the conditions of life in these hideous factory-towns of northern and central England were a scandal which cried shame upon the richest and most prosperous country in the world. Murmurs of discontent, of course, there were; and in the last years of

the century these murmurs grew. Now, the only effective weapon which these wretched folk could wield was combination. They could combine, form societies, or (as we should say) Trade Unions, and enforce their demands for better wages or conditions by the threat or act of strike. Such combinations did in point of fact take place, and workmen approached their masters with not unreasonable demands. But such a course was in those days accounted as a crime against society. If wages were to be regulated at all, their regulation had been held for centuries past to be the business of the State alone. Any interference on the part of workmen would only act, it was thought, to the detriment of the nation's precious trade; and such an interference could not for a moment be allowed. Parliament was approached. The country, let us remember, was at the crisis of its war, and at such times the government is often in a nervous state.

The Combination Act.—Disturbed by the news of what was going on, and scared by the revolutionary spirit that was spreading across from France, the nation's representatives determined on stern suppression of all "combination in restraint of trade." By the so-called "Combination Law" of 1799 they enacted that all conference between workmen was a crime, punishable by imprisonment or hard-labour for two months. In vain did the artisans protest against this tyrannical procedure. It is true that the masters themselves were also forbidden to combine; but there was little chance that they would be detected, still less that they would be punished. The sole effect of the law was to give them unlimited advantage to grind down the men and women under their control. Thus a bootmaker in London halved his employees' pay, and, when some of them protested, he haled them up before the court of the Lord Mayor and had them committed for hard labour. A group of cotton-weavers at Stockport refused to continue work on account of a deduction made from their miserable pittance (eight shillings weekly for a day of fourteen hours). They too were given a choice between immediate resumption or the jail. If such cases were exceptional, it serves merely as a proof how utterly the rest were terrorised and cowed. The industrial labourer was in short reduced to the rank of a slave or a helot. Work he must for whatever hours his masters might demand and for whatever wage they offered. Yet, as some of the men complained, it was literally unsafe to mention the forbidden topic of working hours or wages even within the shelter of their own cottage walls.

Enclosure.—The lot of the agricultural labourer meanwhile was not dissimilar; but his particular misfortunes sprang from a separate cause, and, to understand this properly, we must first cast back our minds some way into the past. Twice during the history of the country, once in the fourteenth century and once in Tudor times, our attention has been drawn to the process of "Enclosure," whereby the open fields of "common land" had been fenced in by pushful landlords. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that this process, though more or less

continuous throughout the centuries, was by any means complete, or that the whole of England was now parcelled out in separate hedged-lined fields. Indeed, at the beginning of the eighteenth century as much as half the country still remained unenclosed. Thus in most villages there were still large areas of this so-called "common" part of it plough-land, cut up in long narrow strips and divided in varying proportions among the villagers, part of it open pasturage or "waste," where nearly every villager would have his "rights," and on which he could graze a cow, feed geese, pick faggots, or cut turf. Such a system, however, did not suit the progressive theories of the more powerful landowners, and a growing population had made increased production every year more necessary. Great loss of time and trouble were involved in the cultivation of the scattered "strips," and a compact farm of large-sized fields was far more efficient, more productive, and more economical. Throughout the eighteenth century, therefore, every effort had been made to do away with the old system and to "enclose" the land wherever it was possible to do so. Towards the end of the century the process became more rapid, but its climax was only reached during the period of the war itself.

The threatened shortage in the supply of grain, and the magnificent inducements then held out to any who should grow it, provided a stimulus to which the landowners were only too anxious to respond. It had been proved already that "enclosure" paid; it was equally certain now that in these years of dearth "enclosure" would pay doubly; so millions and millions of fresh acres were enclosed. The procedure was quite simple. The local squire made application before Parliament. A Bill was drafted for the grant of enclosure of the district. The members, most of whom were landowners or the partisans of such, gave ready assent to its provisions, and a party of commissioners was then sent down to the village to divide up the "common lands." The big landowner himself received a goodly share, both of pasture-land and of tillage. He fenced it round, and, working it in conjunction with his existing fields, he was soon able to render it more fruitful and productive. The same held true of the more prosperous farmers. But the effects of the new enclosures did not end there. The other smaller holders of the old common lands received from the commissioners—in due proportion—a compact plot which it was their duty to fence in. But here lay the rub. The poor man could often not afford to fence his plot, and, if he failed, the plot was thereby forfeit. Nor, if he succeeded, were his troubles over. In the old days he had just been able to make two ends meet, because, besides the produce which he grew on his small strips, he possessed various rights, as we have seen, over the common "waste" or pasture. But by the scheme of the redistribution the "common" was no more; there was nowhere now where he could graze his cow; nowhere to drive his geese; nowhere to gather faggots or cut peat for his cottage fire. The small holder was deprived, in short, of half his livelihood, and there is little wonder that the land-

lords' policy was the cause of bitter and widespread resentment. Notices of the application for "enclosure" were torn down from the church door. The obnoxious rails and fences set up on the new boundaries were uprooted in the night. The magistrates punished the offenders ruthlessly whenever they could catch them. Riots broke out and were suppressed, and still the process of redistribution pursued its fatal course. The agriculture of the country was no doubt thereby improved; but thousands upon thousands of sturdy English yeomen were ruined out of hand. The small plots they were allowed passed away from them to others. Some migrated to the towns or to the colonies. Some became hired labourers on the larger farms. But, though the farmers thrived, the wages they paid were so inadequate that the men who sowed and harvested the grain were literally unable to keep their stomachs fed. The situation went rapidly from bad to worse, and, warned by the example lately set by the French peasants, the authorities took fright.

Poor Relief and Justice.—Their remedy, however, was almost worse than the disease. It had been the custom since Elizabethan times to allow the poor and sick a certain measure of relief, paid by the sanction of a magistrate out of the local "rates." This dole was, naturally, not intended for able-bodied workers, but, rather than see the standard of men's wages raised, the authorities determined to apply it to that purpose. A certain fixed rate of poor relief was granted to each family, more when the price of grain increased, and less when it diminished. The plan was costly, and as much as seven million pounds was doled out annually to keep the folk alive. Yet, although the "rates" came out of the landowner's pocket, the system paid him well. Rents were high, but, so long as wages were kept low, the tenant farmers could afford them. And wages did keep low, for seeing that the labourer was assisted from the rates, it proved unnecessary to pay him more. Indeed, the very fact that he was in receipt of such assistance was often used as an excuse to pay him less. Thus the authorities' object was achieved; but at what a lamentable cost! The agricultural labourer was now worse than his master's slave. He was a pauper, dependent for his livelihood on the doles paid by the rich and thereby doubly pledged to good behaviour. Starvation itself was almost a lesser evil than the monstrous scandal of this universal degradation. But the peace was at least outwardly preserved.

Such then was the fruit—the bitter fruit—of a century of constitutional government. It was now one hundred and five-and-twenty years since the pretensions of an ambitious monarchy had been overthrown and a new era ushered in with golden prospects of freedom and reform. But the English people had been cheated of its destiny. The very men who had broken the Crown's power had established themselves securely in its room, and their little finger had, in fact, proved thicker than the strongest Stuart king's loins. All the fine phrases these men had once employed about liberty and justice had turned out a

hollow sham. "Self-government" had been interpreted as meaning government by themselves. "Freedom" had signified nothing but the strong man's freedom to lord it over the weak, and "Parliamentary privilege" had become the strongest weapon of misrule in the hands of this selfish aristocracy. Their power was limitless. The House of Lords was drawn wholly from their ranks; the House of Commons was "representative" of them alone. The laws which they made in Parliament they further administered as magistrates, and the artisan or labourer who fell foul of his employer soon found himself put into the dock *with the employer as his judge*. Thus the old talk of English liberty and English justice, which had figured so large in the preceding era, was conveniently forgotten, and no sooner were the aristocracy established as the "governing class" than they began to think of governing to the exclusion of all else.

Let us, however, be fair to these men and try at least to understand them. They believed with a conviction—blind perhaps, but still indubitably honest—that the whole country's welfare depended on themselves; they were the sheet-anchor of the State. The ignorant, unlettered masses they regarded as animals or children who stood in need at all times of external guidance, required upon occasions fatherly correction, must not be humoured or pampered or indulged, and must not, come what might, be allowed to do any thinking or acting for themselves. Even the more conscientious members of "upper-class" society—the theorists, the philanthropists, the parsons—held much the same opinion of the "lower classes." It was the fashion to be shocked at their "levity," horrified at their "extravagance." God had made some men poor for His own sufficient reasons, and their duty it was to accept contentedly the station in life to which they were assigned; to quarrel with their lot, or to attempt to alter it, was a sin. Then came the French upheaval. These comfortable philosophers saw the whole social fabric of a neighbour nation totter to its fall; and feeling that, should England follow that pestilent example, all would soon be lost, the governing class set themselves down to "govern" with the conscientious rigour for which the crisis called. Fresh laws were made for the punishment of crime, and old laws were administered with a new severity. Barracks were built in the more unruly towns, and militiamen were instructed in the art of quelling mobs. Thank God, the "governing class" had at least done its duty; and His Majesty's Government, as the Iron Duke would have said, had been carried courageously and firmly on.

Reactionaries and Reformers.—Yet here and there scattered throughout England were those whose consciences rebelled against the theory of society, and who would by no means acquiesce in this brutal use of power. It must not be forgotten, if we are to do the period justice, that one great act of enlightenment had been achieved—the abolition of the Slave Trade. The enthusiasm of Wilberforce, backed by an organization originally started among the Quakers, and aided

by the powerful personality of Fox, had in 1807 during the Whig Ministry of All The Talents accomplished this great reform. Negroes were no longer to be exported from the coast of Africa in ships of the British Flag. Yet even the same men who had thus fought the battle for humanity, were slow to see the need for similar measures nearer home. Consciences however were not altogether easy. Towards the close of this gloomy era we begin to see the first gleams, as it were, of a new spirit which was one day, not far distant, to spread its light over the land. There were already liberal-minded zealots who openly preached the emancipation of the masses. There were "Radical" reformers who desired to see the whole condition of society "radically" changed—changed, that is, from the very root. There were even those among the well-to-do who, anxious to set an example of reform, undertook themselves to lead the "simple life," tried to manage without servants, and excluded such luxuries as wine and pastry from their homes. Then, too, as always at such times, there were hot-headed young rebels, who were up in arms against the old rules of stiff convention, and who wished to remodel creation on a pattern of their own. There was the poet Shelley, who first shocked society by his atheistical opinions, and then caused a tremendous stir by his strange views about divorce. There was Lord Byron, who also shocked society without much troubling about theories, and who yet was one day to sacrifice his life in the more noble cause of winning freedom for the Greeks. Even the solemn steady-going Wordsworth had passed, as we have seen, through a youthful phase of republican enthusiasm. Nor is it mere accident that all these three were poets; for, though we can find evidence in many quarters that a new spirit was stirring in the heart of England, yet nowhere perhaps was it more clearly manifest than in the world of books. If these poets were potential rebels in their political opinions, they were actual rebels in their art. More than this, they won their fight; and it is an interesting comment on the character of Englishmen that the most successful revolution they accomplished was the literary revolution which we call the "Romantic Movement."

The Romantic Poets.—The time was ripe for such a movement. A change was overdue. Throughout the eighteenth century poetry had been dying. The classical tradition, fostered by Pope and Johnson, had done all that could humanly be done to kill it.¹ Verse was turned out by rules, like a recipe in cookery. Plays were written and re-written upon the hackneyed themes of old Greek tragedy. Language had become so formal and so stilted that it lacked all living fire; and the literary hack, instead of following his own instincts or using his own observation, kept stiffly to the approved and classic models of the past. If he wrote a play, he did not try to depict men and women as they really were, but made his heroes rant and his heroines soliloquize in

¹ We should not forget, however, the genius of Thomas Gray, whose "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," though somewhat formal in character, remains a poetic masterpiece.

the so-called "Grand Style" of the classic drama. If he undertook to describe a sunrise, he did not get up betimes to seek inspiration on the spot, but worked out his effusion at a midnight sitting with appropriate tags from Ovid and Pope's *Iliad*. Originality, in short, was less considered than a show of what passed for learning. Nothing was fresh; all came at second-hand; and it was against such artificial and outworn conventions that the "Romantic Poets" raised the standard of revolt. Their innovations followed two separate lines. In the first place, they abandoned the old threadbare subjects and sought their inspiration in more fruitful fields. The enchanted atmosphere of mediæval legend gave Coleridge his idea of "Christabel" and Keats his "La Belle Dame sans Merci." The old-world ballad was revived in the "Ancient Mariner"; and Sir Walter Scott drew upon the folklore of the Highlands for his "Lady of the Lake."¹

This escape from the bondage of the classic models to the more congenial element of native poetry produced at once a freer and more natural art. Originality was recovered at a stroke. In these romantic tales of love-lorn maidens, elfin castles, and mysterious dooms, the imagination kindled to more genuine emotions; and these poets sang no longer to satisfy a formula, but rather to express the beauty of their inmost thoughts. So, along with their new choice of actual subject, they combined also a new outlook on the world. They attempted to see things with their own eyes—men as God had made them, Nature as she is. The beautiful in landscapes had for them a special fascination; and, just as the rising artists Constable and Turner were abandoning the cut-and-dried recipes of earlier painters for a more faithful reproduction of the sunshine and the cloud, so with the poets there was a sincere endeavour to study natural objects for themselves. The result is to be seen in Shelley's odes to the "West Wind" and the "Skylark," in Keats's "Autumn," or in Coleridge's sonnet on the clouds. But the most thorough-going student of them all was Wordsworth.² He withdrew himself into the wilds of the Lake district to be alone with Nature, and he carried his enthusiasm to such a pitch that it became with him a theory. He held that to be "natural" a poet must be plain, and that in telling of simple country folk and country things he must make use of none but the simplest and most ordinary words. This theory, unhappily, he carried much too far. It produced a large number of indifferent poems, such as "We are Seven," "Peter Bell," and "The Fountain"; and, not altogether unjustly, it made him the laughing-stock of critics and the butt of parodists for many years to come. Wordsworth, however, fought on in the face of criticism; and the cause for which he and his fellow-poets had been striving prevailed in the long run. Keats, whom the cruelty

¹ Robert Burns, the Ayrshire poet, had worked independently on the same lines. He was a true son of "nature"—a common ploughman's son; and his art was "natural" in a more genuine sense than the more studied "Naturalism" of Coleridge or Wordsworth.

² For illustration, see Plate XXII, opp. page 608.

of the critics is generally reputed to have killed, has since his death been placed by popular consent among the first of British poets. Shelley too died young, but he too was soon famous. Wordsworth lived on, to be appointed in old age as Poet Laureate and to be acknowledged perhaps the greatest of the three. When he forgot his laboured effort to be "natural," and expressed his thoughts in the language which came most natural to himself, then indeed it was a different matter. Few poets have entered more deeply into the beauty of flowers, and birds, and woodland scenery, than the author of "Daffodils," and "Tintern Abbey," and the still more celebrated "Ode."¹

The English Novel.—Yet natural scenery is but one side, and not, perhaps, the chief side, of existence. The proper study of mankind, as Pope remarked, is man; and it would be absurd, while discussing the literature of poets, to pass over in silence the birth of the English Novel. The novel came quite suddenly, and in a short time had made an extraordinarily rapid growth. In the forties and fifties the foundations had been laid by the great trio, Richardson, Fielding and Smollett. Goldsmith and Sterne had carried on the work. Sir Walter Scott had extended its range yet further, while, at the same time, increasing its popularity; and by the end of the great wars Jane Austen was writing what many have considered the most consummate novels of the English tongue. Here human character is drawn with such fidelity that Miss Austen can tell us much about the people of her day that no mere historian can ever truly tell. Her scope, it is true, was strictly limited. She describes the humdrum trivialities of life in the genteel family of small town or country-side. Neither to her own contemporaries nor to ourselves did she endeavour to reveal the minds and habits of any other class. Yet the scope of the novel could not long remain thus narrow. Soon enough its searchlight was certain to be turned upon other strata of society; and those who had been interested in the fashionable gossip of Miss Austen's gentlemen and ladies would one day be interested to hear the tale of *Oliver Twist* and the thieves' kitchen, of the slums, the debtors' prison, and the underworld of towns. In short, the novel was an instrument—above all in such hands as those of Dickens—peculiarly adapted to the task of showing one class

¹ Parodies of Wordsworth are numberless; and it is easy to ape the artificial simplicity of his "natural poems." This, for instance, is a well-known parody:

They got into a hackney coach
And trotted down the street;
I saw them go; one horse was blind;
The tails of both hung down behind,
Their shoes were on their feet.

Wordsworth's own poems, however, can supply absurdities which outdo any parody; such as this stanza from the "Huntsman":

"Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell;
For still the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell."

how other classes lived. Its essential function was to tell the truth, whether pleasant or unpleasant; and never did the truth need telling more than in the year of grace 1815.

The capital blunder of the eighteenth century had been a failure of sympathy between the rich and the poor; and the worst of it was that this lamentable breach was something new in England. Your mediæval landlord was often a close man where his feudal rights were touched, but he was seldom churlish. He knew the peasants and lived cheek by jowl with them, and, as Chaucer shows, there was an easy familiarity between all ranks and stations. In Shakespeare's world it is the same, and high and low bandy good-humoured jests without servility upon the one hand or condescension on the other. But, whether it were the influx of new wealth and the increasing power of money, or whatever were the cause of it, the eighteenth-century magnate began to cultivate an air of self-conscious dignity, to stand aloof upon a pedestal, and to look down contemptuously on the poor folk—the phrase is new—of the “lower classes.” So those whose peculiar duty it was, as governors, to do so had never learnt to know or trust their fellow-men. It was to take another fifty, perhaps a hundred, years before the mistake should be discovered or the neglected lesson learnt—and who shall say that it has been fully mastered even now?

PART IV
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER
1815-1927

CHAPTER I

EUROPE AFTER WATERLOO

I

Summary of Nineteenth Century.—Many causes contribute to make the study of the nineteenth century a peculiarly difficult and bewildering task. In the first place, by reason of their very nearness to ourselves, it is hard to place events and personalities in their genuine perspective; and the mass of evidence becomes so overwhelming that, as the proverb goes, we can scarce see the wood for the trees. Then, again, the period itself is one of extraordinary complexity. New problems open out in all directions, and there seems no common principle whereby to knit them up. Thus, there are many wars occurring in the century; but no central antagonism appears here at the root of all, as, in the previous century, each fresh campaign was but another chapter in the age-long conflict between England and France. Politics, too, strike out into unfamiliar branches; and the student of Parliamentary doings is distracted by a multitude of fresh issues—imperial and municipal, social and industrial, moral and economic (half the very terms themselves are new). Party rivalry becomes more active. New party cries are raised; new party labels begin to be adopted. Trades Unions, too, are formed; and Labour—a new antagonist—enters the field. Meanwhile, to complicate the matter further, Englishmen are busy in every quarter of the globe, administering, developing, and extending their Colonial Empire; so that English history is scarcely now to be dissevered from the history of the world, and there is little that happens in any time or place but directly or indirectly it affects her politics. More especially, perhaps, does this hold true of Europe. There had been days when continental peoples might do much as they pleased without the English people feeling the result; but now the international situation has become so delicate, and every State is grown so dependent upon others, that they must needs watch developments in Germany and France almost as closely as if they had been England's own. In short, modern life has become at the same time more full in detail and more wide in scope. Our days are busier than those of our great-great-grandfathers. Our interests are more numerous and our commitments larger. Our life is to theirs as is a copy of "The Times"—with its ample information of five continents, its multitudinous items of trivial incident, its separate columns upon art and music, law and religion, athletics and finance—as compared with the simple news-sheet of the Georgian epoch,

easily to be read and exhaustively digested with the somewhat ample breakfast then in fashion. But if the record of a single modern day is thus voluminous, it stands to reason that a hundred years of this hurly-burly many-sided life cannot easily be compressed into a score of chapters. It is our business, therefore, to concentrate upon the more important problems and to let the rest go to the winds. We must select with care, but reject without remorse. Above all, we must endeavour to hold fast to the main thread of the century's development, and to grasp in a broad sense whither the world has on the whole been travelling during these eventful and momentous years.

This much at least is perhaps worth saying in advance. In its broad outline our period falls into two well-defined and roughly equal parts. Up to the middle of the century we shall witness a continuous, though uphill, struggle of popular agitation against monarchical oppression, ending in a more than partial triumph for democracy. France in her Revolution had pointed the way; and one by one the other nations essayed, though with more faltering step, to follow in her tracks. England, by the great Reform Bill of 1832, extended a share in the country's government to a somewhat wider circle of her folk. In Spain the Crown was driven by a series of national uprisings to submit to a constitutional régime. In 1830 a sturdy band of brave Greek patriots threw off the Turkish yoke. Soon after, the Belgian people won their liberty. In 1848 Italy made an effort which, though failing for the moment, laid at least the foundations of ultimate success. In the same year, too, the German populace made a half-hearted bid for freedom. Their revolution failed; and by that failure was determined the history of the century's second half. For, while in 1850 the rest of Europe was pledged in varying degrees to the ideals of democracy, Germany and Austria stood apart, monarchies unconverted and impenitent.

In the second part of our period, therefore, the course of development follows two widely divergent lines. Britain moves forward—faltering still, stumbling, and feeling her way—along the path towards larger freedom. She extends the franchise to a still wider circle of the common folk by a second great measure of reform. She begins, however grudgingly, to allow Labour the right to speak and act; and, though tempted to other courses by the subtle lure of Empire, she makes the great discovery that not colonies alone, but even conquered peoples, can be most effectually governed by allowing them the privilege of governing themselves. In her heart of hearts, though she will not admit it, she even begins to feel a dim suspicion that the same may actually be true of Ireland. Meanwhile, upon the Continent things have taken a very different course. Under Bismarck's able guidance the militarist monarchy of Prussia pushes to the fore, first bringing Austria to heel, then humbling France, and exercising at the same time such authoritative pressure on her neighbouring sister States that Bismarck's master from being Prussian King becomes at last Emperor of all Germany. Thus, while in other countries Liberty is gaining in her stride (for Italy has

by now thrown off the yoke of Austria, and even the Russian Tsar has made large concessions to his peasant subjects), Central Europe still stands for the monarchical ideals of the Bourbon or the Stuart.

Thus were the lists made ready for a final and decisive test between the old gods and the new. The Great War was the inevitable sequel of that fatal parting of the ways; and before the world could be "made safe for Democracy and Freedom," the issue between the rival champions was bound to be squarely joined. The true key to the history of the nineteenth century is to be found in what has happened in the twentieth.

II

Popular Aspirations.—The victory of Waterloo has long served as the accredited landmark of historians; but in point of fact it was during 1814 rather than 1815 that the old chapter of European politics was definitely closed and the new chapter begun. For in the autumn of that year the Congress met which was to shape the immediate future, at any rate, of the Continent's affairs. Napoleon had been compelled in spring to abdicate his throne, and had retired an exile to Elba; and in September the representatives of the powers had assembled at Vienna, where through the months of winter and spring they laboured to set an exhausted world again upon its feet. Napoleon's unexpected re-appearance and the forlorn adventure of his "Hundred Days" caused, it is true, some interruption of their labours; but it was brief, and, just a week before the battle of Waterloo was fought, the Congress issued its final mandate to the world. Great things were to have come out of that settlement, and hopes not unnaturally ran high. For twenty years Europe had been racked by an almost continual series of destructive wars; and, when the chief author of their troubles had been at last removed, the peoples breathed again. They believed that now at last the lessons of a suicidal conflict had been taken well to heart, that swords would immediately be converted into ploughshares and spears beaten into pruning-hooks. Europe's peace henceforward seemed assured. The Millennium was at hand.

Had peace been all that European peoples needed, the Vienna settlement might be called a great success; for nearly forty years were to elapse before war again broke out between the leading powers. Yet peace was not the only nor perhaps the chief demand of the expectant peoples. A new spirit—call it democracy or what you will—was now abroad in Europe; and the desire for a freer life was planted deep. The French Revolution had begun it. Men had watched with bewildered eyes this first audacious experiment in true democracy; and they had come to realise almost despite themselves that something else than the old familiar form of aristocratic government was not merely possible, but worked. Then came Napoleon; and, as the representative of his country's new ideal, he had carried something of its spirit into

the surrounding lands which he conquered. In Germany he had found the peasant a down-trodden serf; he had left him a free owner of the soil. There and elsewhere he had replaced by well-ordered government and justice the old slipshod, selfish methods of aristocracies and kings; and the great legal code, which was called after his name, had become the charter of all Central Europe. It was therefore not unnatural that the citizens of these countries dreaded a return to the tyranny and inefficiency of bygone days. Their eyes had been opened to the gross shortcomings of their own half-feudal governments. They had tasted the advantages of organized control; and they refused to forget. Nor was this all; Napoleon's schemes of conquest had produced another and even more permanent result. However efficient his rule had never been popular for the simple reason that it was an alien rule; and the occupation of their fatherland by Frenchmen had made these folk realise, almost for the first time perhaps, that a fatherland was something for which they really cared. In Spain we have seen with what surprising resolution the common folk had rallied to resist the invasion of their soil; and, even in countries which had failed at first of such successful opposition, the effect was eventually the same. Napoleon's presence awoke in them a spirit of patriotism and a sense of national existence such as they had never felt before; and, now that they had recovered their independence, they were the more unwilling to surrender up their lives into the keeping of their own irresponsible governments and kings. For better or for worse the war-cry of liberty had been raised; and its echoes were never wholly to die down again until the long battle had been fought and won.

The Attitude at Vienna.—To the monarchs, princes, and diplomats assembled at the Austrian capital in 1814 all this, however, appeared in a different and much less rosy light. To them democracy was a will-o'-the-wisp, an illusion, and a dangerous illusion at that. With the exception of Switzerland, there was not then, let us remember, one single State in Europe but was governed either by an absolute monarch or by a narrow noble caste; and, to the governors at least, such governments appeared the only natural and appropriate method of maintaining orderly control. Picture, therefore, with what horror and disgust these men had beheld a King of France dethroned, imprisoned, and beheaded, with what dismay they witnessed the rise of a French democracy upon the foundations of that hideous crime, and with what perturbation they became presently aware that the Revolution had struck a sympathetic chord in the hearts of their own subject populations. What Bolshevism in our own day has been to the governing classes all the world over, that the Revolution was to the crowned heads of Europe a hundred years ago. They were genuinely scared; they felt the foundations of society to be quaking beneath their feet; and, if they acted blindly, they acted not unnaturally. For they verily believed that the maintenance of their own authority, and that alone, could save the world from irretrievable disaster. When, therefore, they

assembled to discuss the situation and to devise, if possible, a remedy for the impending danger, their one fixed idea was to re-establish, so far as it lay within their power to do so, the precise condition of affairs that had existed previous to the war. "Let nothing be changed," they pronounced with an almost incredible audacity. As well might they have demanded, like Canute, that the waters of the ocean should obey them; for the march of progress can no more be stayed than the incoming of the tide.

Metternich, Alexander, Castlereagh.—Such, then, was the temper of the august assembly which met to discuss the resettlement of Europe in the ancient city of the Hapsburg Emperors. Wholly in keeping with that temper was the atmosphere of the Court, which, more perhaps than any other in the world, might be held to represent the old mediæval tradition of absolute, unfettered monarchy. Life at Vienna was redolent of the callous selfishness and irresponsible extravagance which were the crying scandal of the old régime. During that winter many peasants of the Austrian country-side were dying of starvation; yet £10,000 was expended daily in the capital on the entertainment of the illustrious guests. Balls and levees, masquerades and concerts were provided in plenty for the gay society which had followed in the representatives' train; and there was more of dancing and flirtation during the months of that fateful session than of honest work or sober thought. So Nero fiddled, while Rome burned; and so on the eve of the Revolution the lords and ladies of King Louis' Court had made merry at their ease. But behind the brilliant externals of ceremonial pomp and frivolous amusement there lay something also a good deal worse than mere ignorance and folly. In the background there were a multitude of clever wits at work; ambitious schemes were being pushed with energy and cunning; spies and secret agents kept close watch over chance words or significant encounters; and intrigues, hatched under cover of a tea-party or luncheon, were sedulously developed within the council chamber walls. In all this the Congress was no better and no worse than others of its sort. The diplomacy of the day was at best a discreditable business. It expected no standard of honesty, and pretended to none. Its avowed and patent object was by whatever means to outwit and get the better of a rival. Now in this unpleasant game of political intrigue there was no master to compare with the Austrian Emperor's own representative and minister, Prince Metternich. A courtly, handsome figure, blazing with the stars and decorations of a dozen different countries and bearing his great responsibilities with an inimitable grace, the Prince moved in that heterogeneous gathering as in his natural element; and there he found for his peculiar talents an unrivalled scope. He could engage an enemy in a chat about the weather and pick a secret from his casual looks. His polished charm of manner and address enabled him to win the confidence of men who had every cause to fear him and distrust him; for he could joke or argue, flatter or cajole without once betraying by his suave demeanour a hint of what secret

machinations lay beneath. Even Napoleon, with all his genius for hypocrisy and bluff, had found in this young Austrian nobleman a foe worthy of his steel. But, more than this, Prince Metternich, as Austria's representative, was naturally appointed to preside over the Congress; and in him, as it so happened, the doctrine of resistance to democracy and freedom found its most complete and virulent expression. Honestly believing the revolutionary spirit to be the invention of the Evil One, he felt that for Europe the one hope of safety lay in stifling the menace at its birth. This "by the aid of God" he was determined to effect, and to vanquish his new enemy the People, just as he boasted to have vanquished already the conqueror of the world. At the Vienna Congress (as after it for thirty years and over) this was the guiding star of Metternich's perverse, infinitely capable, but in the long run ruinous diplomacy.

There was, however, among the other parties at that Congress one who could speak with as much authority as Metternich himself, but whose views were at the same time almost diametrically opposed to his—Alexander, the Russian Tsar. Like many of his countrymen, Alexander's temperament was of an ill-balanced, impressionable type. Always deeply religious—but with a zeal which often bordered on fanaticism—he had fallen of late under the unhealthy influence of a certain female prophet or divine. He too fancied that he had a "heavenly mission" to accomplish in the world; but his gospel was far from being the gospel of the Austrian Prince. As a young man he had been converted by a study of the treatises of Rousseau to a belief in the rights and liberties of man; and, despite the autocratic traditions of his office, he had even put a part of his ideals into practice by beginning the emancipation of the Russian serfs. So, though Metternich called him a madman for his pains, and though the rest of his fellow-princes regarded his suggestions with half-tolerant amusement or a sneer, Alexander attempted at Vienna to uphold the principle of progress and reform: the people, so he argued, must be given their head; some sort of representative assembly was a necessary condition of civilised life; and, wherever such an institution had been put in force or promised, it was equally against all commonsense or justice to cancel or withhold the boon. Men might laugh, but they were bound to listen. The Tsar of Russia was perhaps the most important personage in Europe; his country was least of any exhausted by the war; he could count on an army of unnumbered thousands; and, however odd they might appear to others, his views were not a factor to be lightly ignored. Midway in opinion between Metternich on the one hand and Alexander on the other stood the British representative and Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh. Castlereagh was no dreamer. With the Tsar's enthusiasms he did not pretend to sympathise; indeed, he could hardly understand them. But he was ten times more honest a fellow than the Austrian. A solid, silent, typical Englishman of the old school, he knew what he wanted and he usually got it, but without unnecessary

fuss or showy argument; for he had no gift of the gab. By temperament and training a Conservative, he too felt for the Revolution a loathing which he made no effort to conceal. But it was not easy for the representative of England, with her long and famous history of constitutional development, to think quite as others did. Castlereagh, therefore, was unable to follow his continental colleagues into their more wild and fanatical attacks upon the liberties of peoples. Though willing to restrain, he was not prepared to tyrannise; and—with an inclination characteristically British to give foreigners the benefit of the doubt—he could scarcely bring himself to believe that others meant to do so.

III

With such wide divergence of standpoint and opinion existing between the chief members of the Congress there was clearly every prospect of lively disagreement. Clash of material interests and political prejudice gave rise to bitter words and stormy scenes; and at one point it appeared as good as certain that the different parties of the Grand Alliance would be plunged into mutual war. Nevertheless, the crisis passed; the conference proceeded; the representatives of the five leading powers worked hard; and at length, amid general satisfaction, the looked-for settlement was made. The work of the Congress may be grouped under three heads: first, the measures taken to stem the progress of revolutionary ideas; second, the redistribution of the territorial map; and, finally, the reassertion of the essential unity of Europe, and a brave, though ineffective, endeavour to establish what we should call to-day a League of Nations.

Talleyrand and Legitimacy.—First, then, and most dear to the heart of the assembled statesmen, a principle was established whereby the authority of kings over their peoples might be set beyond a doubt. Under Napoleon's régime, we must remember, many crowned heads had temporarily disappeared, and their places been taken by the Emperor's relatives or nominees. The problem of restoring the dispossessed to their inheritance was formulated by the representative of France, Talleyrand Périgord, ex-bishop of Autun. Talleyrand had trimmed his sails adroitly during the storms of the Revolution, had served under Napoleon, and yet by ingenious manœuvring retained a high position after his master's fall. Champion now of the repatriated Bourbon, Louis XVIII, Talleyrand had a supreme interest in rendering the position of his new protégé secure. He therefore put forward the doctrine that even though kingship were not actually conferred by an act of Divine Grace, yet its tenure ought at least to be confirmed by the legal recognition of mankind. Thrones, in fact, provided they were hereditary, well established, or (in the phrase he used) "legitimate," were to be regarded as the inalienable property of their possessors, and the unani-

mous support of the European powers should go to back the claim of all such legitimate monarchs. The Congress fell in readily with Talleyrand's idea; and by general agreement the exiled rulers, not of France alone, but of Spain, Naples, and the larger German principalities, were duly reinstalled.

Constitutions Granted or Withheld.—But, though the privilege of monarchs was thus satisfactorily upheld, and the work of the revolutionary period undermined, it still remained to determine on what precise conditions the restored monarchs were to rule. Were they to be given a fresh lease of their old unlimited power; or was the people's claim to be considered and some say allowed them in the management of their national affairs? In France it was felt with good reason that there would be the greatest difficulty in putting back the clock to pre-revolutionary days; and the French at least were therefore to retain the privilege of a representative assembly, for whatever that privilege were worth. In Spain, however, where during the war against Napoleon a full-fledged democratic constitution had equally been formed, the case was very different. There things had not gone as yet too far; and, when the restored monarch proceeded soon after his return to abolish the obnoxious constitution root and branch, none were better pleased than his friends of the Vienna Congress. The problem of the German States was more difficult. The German people were notoriously unready to bow the neck, as of old, to their narrow-minded feudal princelings; and some trouble might be expected in bringing them to heel. It seemed as though some sort of constitution would have to be allowed them. Alexander talked grandly about re-establishing the Germans "upon the ancient spirit of their people." Even Metternich felt doubts. A skilful compromise settled the point. The Congress suggested that the formation of some representative assembly was desirable in all the German States, but provided no machinery whatever to ensure that this was done. Thus, if the German Princes were successful in holding their own against popular pressure, no one would be sorry; if, on the other hand, they failed and the people went too far, recourse could always be had to exterior assistance. Metternich and his friends, however unwise the policy, were prepared to interfere, and if necessary (as we shall see) to interfere with force. In short, the purpose which these gentlemen pursued, was at all points very signally achieved. The people were shackled once more with the chains which had so recently been lifted. Their reinslavement was sealed with the approval and authority of the Great Powers, their neighbours; and woe betide them if they dared in the future to renew the attempt to escape! To the potentates at Vienna it appeared indeed as though the past had been effectually erased, and the mischief done by Napoleon consigned to the limbo of forgotten things. Even the famous military road which his engineers had constructed over the Mt. Cenis' pass was actually closed against all travellers. But if by such measures these gentlemen really imagined that the spectres of revolution and democracy could permanently be laid,

they were soon to discover their mistake. The crazy Tsar had after all been right.

Territorial Settlement.—In the second part of their labours—the redistribution of the map—the allied Powers showed themselves as completely indifferent to popular sentiments and national aspirations as they had done in the first. They chopped up territory and parcelled out peoples



FIG. 49.—MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE TREATY OF VIENNA, 1815.

for all the world as though they had been carving a carcass of dead meat. Nor did they even take the trouble to observe the joints or to formulate the frontiers according to any natural division of race, sympathy, or creed. Each of the butchers naturally wanted to annex a goodly portion for himself; and, so far as any common purpose was pursued in the process of readjustment, it was based wholly and solely on the old political notion of preserving the Balance of Power. The first and essential step was of course to deal faithfully with France, and to provide substantial safe-

guards against the renewal of her aggression. A heavy indemnity indeed was levied on her pocket, and an army left to occupy the country until proof of its payment were forthcoming. But this was not felt to be enough; and, despite Alexander's anxiety to spare her, there were those who deemed such punishment inadequate, and who wished to cripple her strength for good and all by cutting her in pieces. A more generous view prevailed; and the Powers were content with taking some precautionary measures with regard to her military frontiers. Belgium, which Napoleon had to all intents and purposes annexed, was compelled much against her will to unite with Holland, and thus to form a powerful bulwark against France upon the north. A similar bulwark was provided in the south by the merging of Genoa with Piedmont. The really crucial question, however, was whether France should be allowed to maintain her frontier on the Rhine. After much hesitation, Alsace and Lorraine, occupied by Louis XIV, were left in her keeping; but farther north she was put back to her old-established boundary; and with that security the Powers felt satisfied that she would be in no position to trouble Europe's peace a second time.

It remained to dispose of the more delicate problem of Central Europe itself. The Holy Roman Empire, that old historic bond which for so many centuries had in some sort held the German principalities together, had lost its last vestige of reality during the Napoleonic wars, and to revive it was beyond the wildest dreams. It was decided, however, to link up the German people—thirty-nine States in all, including both Prussia and Austria¹—in a loose Confederacy or League, over which the Austrian Emperor himself was appointed to preside. But, though the Hapsburgs might retain in form and name the supreme direction over German politics, yet the old, formidable menace of Prussian rivalry was becoming every year more manifest. The aggressive, grasping spirit, which took its origin from that great king and scoundrel Frederic, was still strong in the Prussian statesmen of the day; and in the territorial deal which accompanied this settlement they got by far the best of the bargain. Not merely did Prussia come into possession of half Saxony (the price which that kingdom paid for having sided with Napoleon); but she also received a handsome slice of country upon either side of the Rhine and recovered Western Poland, which, despite his vigorous championship of that unhappy State's integrity, the Tsar was at length driven to concede. To Austria, on the other hand, no such considerable additions were allowed, and she was put off with Lombardy and Venice. It only remained for Bismarck, just half a century later, to complete the process which was now begun, and to show the world that Prussia could achieve a hegemony of mid-Europe which Austria, for all her traditional advantages, was now powerless to recapture.

¹ Napoleon's regrouping of the German States had reduced their number from 360 to this much more reasonable figure, to which in the interests of unity and convenience the Congress of Vienna now adhered.

The Holy Alliance.—Such, then, was the territorial settlement accomplished at Vienna. By their cynical disregard of true national boundaries in Poland, in Italy, in Belgium, and elsewhere, the authors laid up for themselves and their descendants a heritage of interminable discontent, disturbances, and wars; nor had the national aspirations which they flouted received full recognition until but yesterday, at the Conference of Versailles, our twentieth-century statesmen attempted to redraw the map of Europe upon more liberal and equitable lines. In 1815, however, it was thought to have been well done. Old jealousies and recent quarrels were for the time forgotten; and the Congress at length broke up amid general congratulation and good will. The truth is that, in a world so sick of war, even the diplomatists were genuinely conscious of the necessity for international agreement. Such agreement appeared to have been established at Vienna. Differences had been settled upon the principle of mutual give and take. A "Concert" of Europe had, in fact, been temporarily achieved. Four Powers in particular, Prussia, Austria, Russia, and Great Britain, had formed among themselves a Quadruple Alliance as a guarantee of peace; and the nations' ability to hold together was further proved by a series of fresh conferences held in the next few years at which new problems were thoroughly discussed and for the most part satisfactorily arranged. It was not, therefore, for any lack of effort that the "Concert" was eventually to fail, but rather because the principles on which it was founded had been wrong. The co-operation of its members could not, in short, be lasting because it was the co-operation of tyrants and of thieves. They had filched territory here and redrawn boundaries there, not according to the ideals of equity and freedom, but with a view to establishing what seemed to them an appropriate equilibrium between the Powers. They had pledged themselves to the mutual support of one another, not for the furtherance of progress and good government, but in order to secure by such co-operation their individual titles to grind each his subjects down.

To suppose that such a conspiracy of reaction and repression could stand the test of time appears to modern eyes ridiculous. But the statesmen of that day thought otherwise; they believed that upon the basis of their settlement Europe could hold together in the bond of unity and peace. They were, therefore, less astonished than amused when shortly after the close of the Congress the fanatical Tsar proposed to knit the bond yet firmer by a direct appeal to the principles of Christ. In a solemn invitation he adjured the kings and princes to unite there and then in a "Holy Alliance," and to acknowledge that in all their future policies and acts they would be guided solely by the teaching of the Gospels and the ideals of Christian brotherhood and love. To ourselves, knowing the subsequent behaviour of these potentates, the appeal sounds almost blasphemous. Even to the men of that day it seemed somewhat out of taste; it was like exhorting the members of the Stock Exchange to a literal observance of the Sermon on the

Mount. Out of deference to its author, however, the various sovereigns signed. Metternich called it "mere verbiage," but said his master's signature could do no possible harm. England alone held back. Castlereagh broadly hinted that the Tsar's mind was unhinged; but there were stronger reasons than Castlereagh's suspicions for her deliberate abstention. Like the Americans in 1919, the English were by no means anxious to prolong their entanglement in European politics beyond the period of the war. Isolation had always been England's strength; and, whether the Holy Alliance were to be taken seriously or no, British commonsense preferred to be on the safe side and hold aloof. The Prince Regent wrote a cordial letter expressing the warmest sympathy with the noble religious aspirations of the Tsar; but no signature was ever given to that pious document. The Alliance itself was of no very great importance in the years which followed; but England's abstention was. It was a hint—a faint hint perhaps, but for all that significant enough—that already the European Concert was in danger. There was a rift within the lute.

IV

The history of nineteenth-century Europe is the tale of a long-drawn struggle between two sets of men—those who were too obstinately behind their time and those who were too impatiently ahead of it. What the one had done or attempted to do at Vienna we have seen; it was now the turn of the second group to act, and to answer the repressive measures of their masters by an appeal, first of all, to justice, and, if that failed, to force. But though, as the course of events was soon to prove, the flame of liberty might still burn strong, it would be an error to suppose that the great mass of European peoples were actively conscious whither they were moving. Peasants in the main, they were too unlettered and too "hoddenn down" to know well what freedom meant; and the real tragedy of these efforts towards democracy was that in the majority of cases they were hopelessly premature. The people were not ripe for governing themselves; and the success of the popular cause, however promising at first, was inevitably doomed to a subsequent set-back. For the men who led and inspired these agitations were mostly hot enthusiasts equally lacking in experience or restraint; they were of the type who in England would have turned, like Byron and Shelley, to writing revolutionary poems or atheistic tracts. Abroad, however, they found a more natural outlet for their giddy rhetoric in secret societies or among hooligan mobs; and the extremes to which they pushed their hot-headed theories often did the cause of liberty more harm than good.

Repression in Germany.—Now nowhere perhaps were such men so influential or so numerous as among the students of the German University towns; and in Germany it was that revolution (or what the

nervous authorities put down as such) first dared to raise its head. The earliest hint of trouble, though it caused profound alarm, was insignificant enough. A meeting of students was held at the Wartburg to celebrate the anniversary of Luther's Reformation. After an excitable carouse at which rash things were said about the postponement of the promised "constitution," the party danced round a bonfire and, as night wore on, threw into it some anti-democratic books of which they disapproved. Finally, to symbolise their dislike of military despotism, they burnt a soldier's strait-jacket and a corporal's cane. Amazing as it sounds, Metternich himself was seriously perturbed. He knew through spies that disaffection was rife in many German towns; and a year or so later an event occurred to confirm his suspicions. A certain anti-liberal writer, Kotzebue by name, who was popularly supposed to have poisoned the Tsar's mind against reform, was brutally murdered in his private house by a revolutionary fanatic. Then Metternich took action. A Conference was summoned to Carlsbad from the thirty-nine confederate German States; and decrees were passed for the repression of the students' agitations. A ban was laid upon the publication of all questionable books or pamphlets. The Universities were strangled by a discipline so stern that no honest man could dare to speak his mind. Thousands upon thousands of suspected persons were condemned to exile or imprisonment. Thus for a full generation the spirit of liberty was savagely stamped out; and for Germany at least the Austrian minister could answer that the pernicious rot was stayed.

Spain and Verona.—But events elsewhere did not wait upon Metternich's bidding; and no sooner were the flames damped down beyond the Rhine than they flared up even more dangerously in Spain. There, as we have seen, the restored King Ferdinand was no sooner back upon the throne than he made a clean sweep of the democratic constitution which during his absence had controlled the land. All the old bad methods of royal misrule now reappeared; the Inquisition was restored; the prisons overflowed; and the leaders of the recent innovations were the object of a pitiless revenge. The patient country folk accepted the change tamely; but the soldiers who had fought for their fatherland did not. They rose, sacked the great prison of the Inquisition, invaded the royal palace, and forced the unwilling King to restore the constitution he had so recently abolished and to summon the people's representatives once more. Nor was this all; for in another quarter the outbreak was to find a sympathetic echo. Italy, like Spain, was seething with discontent. A secret organisation, known as the "Carbonari" or Charcoal-burners' Club, was working underground; and on news of the triumph of the Spanish insurrection Naples was speedily the scene of a similar attempt. A constitution was drawn up after the Spanish model; and the reinstated Bourbon King—also Ferdinand by name—was compelled to pledge his honour to observe it. With the oath upon his lips, he called God to strike him dead, should he fail to carry out what he had promised; then with incredible duplicity he wrote off a

secret letter asking the Austrian Emperor to help him out of the fix. In the face of such deplorable occurrences it was not for Metternich to make demur. Fears troubled him for the Austrian provinces of Lombardy and Venice; so he called on the southern rebels to undo their work; and, when they indignantly refused, an Austrian army was marched down to Naples and the revolution crushed. It remained to deal with Spain. There things were all to pieces. Civil war was raging; the courts of Europe hummed with anxious talk about the need for outside intervention; and for this, extraordinary as it may seem, none was now more eager than the Tsar himself. The fact was that Alexander's queer, impressionable mind had recently undergone a fresh conversion. Fears of assassination, rumours of Russian revolutionary plots, and the subtle skill with which Metternich made play of these alarms had completely turned him round. He was now as anxious to suppress democracy as he had once been zealous to encourage it; and, when news came that the Spanish monarch was battling for his throne, Alexander determined to assist him. He offered a strong Russian army for service at Madrid and proposed to march it over through Germany and France. Against such a scheme, however, the French King set his face. He, too, was as eager as anyone to crush the Spanish rising; but he was jealous of the Tsar, resented Russian interference in western politics, and preferred, if Spain was to be taught a lesson, to do the dirty work himself. Proposals, objections, and counter-proposals followed thick and fast; and at one time it seemed as though a combined army of all European powers might cross the Pyrenees.

England, however, had the strongest dislike of such a measure. She had spent millions of money and lost thousands of men to save the Spanish people from Napoleon; and she had no wish to see them browbeaten now by this selfish ring of continental bullies. It was therefore singularly appropriate that, when another Congress was summoned at Verona, the representative dispatched in England's name was the old victorious champion of Spanish liberty—the Duke of Wellington himself. But even the Duke's prestige was unavailing. He appealed to the other Powers to hold their hand; but his appeal fell on deaf ears. It was decided that an ultimatum should be sent to the Spanish revolutionaries. The ultimatum was of course rejected. A French army was marched upon Madrid. The popular party was easily put down, and many thousands of its followers were hanged. But ere this a thing had happened which showed that, though sorely shaken, the cause of liberty was not yet dead—the Duke had left Verona. As soon as he realised his plea to have been in vain, he withdrew from the Conference and set his face for home.¹ The “Concert” of Europe was a “Concert” no more; for, rather than see a great people downtrodden and dragooned, England had broken it. For her the choice was now clear. She had

¹ Wellington was acting on instructions contained in a memorandum drawn up by Castlereagh; but, as will be seen later, Canning and not Castlereagh was now his political chief.

come out—after a period of watchful hesitation and demur—upon the side of Nationality and Freedom.

CHAPTER II

ENGLAND AFTER WATERLOO

I

The English Ruling Class.—If England had hesitated to declare her opposition to the policy of the continental despots, she was not without good reason for such hesitation; for her own conscience was anything but clear, and also at home she had been witnessing an exercise of power less tyrannical no doubt than theirs, but at the same time much less justifiable. In England, however, it was not the crown which tyrannised. The royal authority, mortally shaken at the beginning of the eighteenth century, had declined still further before the century's close. George III, after a brave but fruitless effort to restore its old pre-eminence, had fallen on evil days; he was now a hopeless lunatic, unable for the most part even to recognise his friends. His son, destined in 1820 to succeed as George IV, was acting as Prince Regent. A disreputable dissolute fellow, whose behaviour was the scandal of the court, he was nothing more than an ornament to the constitution and an ugly ornament at that. In fact, the real power lay, as we have seen long since, with the aristocracy. Peers of the realm and other titled gentlemen, society favourites and country squires—these were the true governors of England. They ruled through what was in theory a representative assembly; but owing to the corrupt methods and obsolete machinery of Parliamentary election that assembly represented no one but their own exclusive class. And of that class, since the Whigs had blundered badly in the Napoleonic wars, the section now uppermost was the high old Tory gang. Conservatives we should call them; and like Metternich's their remedy for every trouble was the comfortable doctrine, "Let nothing be changed." The lamentable condition of the world at large served only to stiffen them in this opinion; and they felt that after all that had occurred across the Channel the only safe policy was to continue upon their part to rule the British people with a rod of iron.

Though possessed of a high sense of honesty and honour, polished in manner and exquisite in taste, they lacked the imaginative insight of a class which mixes freely with its fellows. They were born and bred from their youth up in a narrow, self-centred and select society. Taught to be gentlemen and to compose Latin Verse at one of the great public schools, they would go on for the most part to Oxford or Cambridge and there learn to talk politics and drink port. And along with these lessons they freely imbibed a sublime conviction of their own trans-

cedent importance. On tradesfolk or even men of business they looked down as on an inferior order of mankind. The workers they regarded as a sort of animal, useful to the community, but difficult to handle and impossible to understand. These other classes it was their own function to order and control; and, to do them justice, they undertook the duty in a serious and conscientious manner. The traditions of public service and administrative efficiency made many of them industrious and capable agents of the State. Their responsibility as landlords (for, as a rule, they owned broad acres) taught them a certain tact in dealing with their tenantry and a pride in the good management of their estates. Their outlook, however, was oddly limited and sadly inconsistent with itself; and, while they would dole out charity with a generous hand to poor parishioners at Christmas, they were content to keep their labourers on a starvation wage. There were even some who would beam with good humour on the peasant who touched his forelock to them at the roadside, but were equally ready to pepper his legs with shot, if he drove the pheasants in the wrong direction for the guns. In short, they were admirable persons, so long as they themselves were allowed to rule the roost; most objectional tyrants if anyone challenged their privilege or dared to cross their will. They imagined themselves to be indispensable, believing, like Sir Leicester Dedlock, the squire in Dickens's novel, "that Nature was on the whole a good idea, but an idea dependent for its execution on your great county families"; and that with any weakening of their influence the world would go to pieces. Like him, too, in their merits no less than their shortcomings, they were "honourable, obstinate, truthful, high-spirited, intensely prejudiced and perfectly unreasonable." Such were the men who had fought Bona-parte and beaten him. They had now to face an even more formidable opponent—the people they were called upon to rule; but they made no doubt whatever that the issue of the contest would be equally triumphant for themselves.

Methods of Repression.—The people, too, had borne their share in the struggle against France. They had borne it with resignation rather than with any enthusiasm, accepting the war as a necessary evil, but buoyed up by the hope of better things when it was over. In that hope they soon found themselves deceived. The years which followed upon Waterloo were miserable years. Trade was slack. Other nations, hitherto dependent upon British exports, were beginning to manufacture for themselves; and the deadly effects of their foreign competition were soon felt among English folk. Hand-workers had already been ousted from their trade by the rivalry of factory machines; and now the industrial workers, who had been herded to those factories, began to be thrown out of employment. The country labourers were scarcely better off. Owing to the progress of enclosure they had lost what little land they owned—the conditions of their life were hard, their wages wretchedly low. These were often supplemented, it is true, by relief out of the Poor Rates; but the spread of this pernicious system meant the loss of



AN EARLY CRICKET MATCH



FOX HUNTING

all liberty and self-respect. The number of paupers grew and grew; and the annual sum expended on their upkeep was doubled during the first two decades of the century. The price of living, too, which ought by rights to have dropped on the return of peace, was artificially sustained. One natural consequence of the war had been to make grain scarce and dear; it should equally of course have become plentiful and cheap when the war had ceased and all harbours been re-opened to importation from abroad. This prospect, however, was most distasteful to the governing class, whose chief interest lay in land. Dear grain had put money into the landlords' pockets; cheap grain from overseas would inevitably have meant their loss—and they demurred. In 1815 a law was therefore passed excluding foreign grain from British ports, unless, as was unlikely, the price of home-grown grain should rise at any time above the exorbitant figure of eight shillings per quarter. The harvests of the years that followed were abnormally poor; and this law, which bolstered up the wealthy landlords and their prosperous farmer-tenants, inflicted most cruel suffering upon the general mass. Yet the mass was powerless to protest; for the men who made the law possessed the power also of enforcing it. As Magistrate and Justice of the Peace, the landowner could meet with stern repression any dangerous symptoms of popular discontent. The laws of the realm gave him ample opportunity. The penalties were numerous and appallingly severe. No less than 223 crimes were then punishable with death. A man might be hanged for shooting at a rabbit, for stealing any article worth five shillings or over, for appearing in disguise upon a public road, for writing a threatening letter, for cutting down young trees, or even—most ludicrous of all—for doing damage to Westminster Bridge. For lesser crimes deportation and other barbarous punishments were prescribed; nor did the magistrates scruple to enforce them.

These were hard days. Criminals were often hanged by batches of a dozen. In one notorious case a lad of fourteen years was put to death for stealing linen. In the army the use of the "cat," laid on by many hundred lashes at a time, had not infrequently a fatal end. For such severity some excuse might perhaps have been discovered during the crisis of the war; but, when the war was finished, there was none. It was simply part of the theory which the governing class upheld that, unless they ruled the people with a rod of iron, something might happen in England that had happened over in France. The real marvel is that it did not.

Peterloo and After.—But things were to grow worse before they could grow better. This policy of repression very naturally gave rise to violence and wild deeds; and such violence no less naturally led on to more repression. Riots took place among the midland miners and the peasantry of Kent. Strange scenes too were enacted in the neighbourhood of factory towns. There the starving craftsmen of the spinning-wheel or hand-loom were maddened by despair. Their source of livelihood was gone; and, seeing the new machinery to be the cause,

they took a blind revenge. Mills were set ablaze by unknown hands at midnight; mill-owners were threatened; shots were fired out of the dark. But the wheels of industrial progress could not thus be stayed; and the violence of the "Luddites"¹ (as the machine-breakers were called) recoiled on their own heads. Exasperated and perturbed by the condition of the country, the authorities struck back. Rioters were dispersed by armed hussars; ring-leaders were arrested and savagely condemned; in 1817 the Habeas Corpus was suspended and imprisonment of unconvicted men thus legalized.

Two years later an event occurred which brought things to a head. The agitators of Lancaster made bold to call a meeting of the local malcontents, and over eighty thousand persons marched in procession to St. Peter's Fields on the outskirts of the town of Manchester. The behaviour of the mob was orderly enough; women and children were present in large numbers; the bands in loyal good humour struck up "God save the King." But the magistrates were frightened; a yeomanry contingent had been summoned out; and, when a speaker rose to demand justice and reform, the order was given for a charge. The yeomanry crashed in with brandished sabres; and within ten minutes St. Peter's Fields were cleared—but not without some bloodshed. Four hundred persons had been wounded; eleven were dead or dying, two of them women, one a child. The "Peterloo Massacre," as the affair was dubbed, sent a thrill of horror through the country; but it decided the authorities on sterner steps. A series of six Acts was passed to make the repetition of such scenes impossible. The holding of public meetings was prohibited; agitators were threatened with severer punishment; and the publication of pamphlets to advocate reform was ruthlessly proscribed. The police were soon busily at work. The magistrates redoubled their zeal. The prisons received their victims; and one unhappy person was even clapped into jail for distributing a pamphlet which turned out on subsequent inquiry to be a religious tract.

The "Six Acts," in short, were a piece of legislation after Metternich's own heart; and the Tory Government which passed them was satisfied that Peterloo would not recur again. By others, however, Peterloo was not forgotten. It had stirred in many hearts a deep sense of cruel injustice; and one mad conspiracy at least was undertaken to avenge it. A small gang of crazy hot-heads got together at a house in Cato Street, off Edgware Road. They arranged to catch the members of the Cabinet when assembled for a dinner, waylay them at the doorstep, and assassinate the lot. Luckily they made a mistake about the house to which the guests had been invited, and, while they were setting watch upon the door of an archbishop, they were rounded up by the police. The poor fanatics paid dearly for their folly, being hanged, and (for the last time in England) beheaded with the axe. But, though their impatient violence had missed its crazy purpose, the

¹ So named after one Ned Ludd, a village idiot of a Leicestershire hamlet, who on a certain occasion retaliated on his tormentors by breaking up some machinery.

cool common-sense of England was soon destined to prevail. Men were beginning to recognise Peterloo for the blundering crime it was, and to realise that this cruel system of repression had overshot the mark. Before long even the Tory ministers themselves came to see their own mistake, and, about the same time that the Duke's withdrawal from Verona declared England's opposition to such tyranny abroad, they were to prove the reality of their conversion by a policy of greater enlightenment at home.

II

Rise of Canning.—Now the man who was most blamed for the tyranny of the Tory cabinet at home was also, as we might have guessed, the man who had lent some countenance at least to the tyranny of continental "Tories" at Vienna—the Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh. Castlereagh was no believer in soft government; nor, so long as he lived at any rate, was there any sign of weakening shown. Yet, hard man though he was, the condition of the country and the unpopularity of his unpleasant policy were slowly wearing him down. Doubts and anxieties preyed upon his health, and at last he abandoned the struggle. One day in the August of 1822—some while, that is, after the Cato Street conspiracy and shortly before the European Congress of Verona—Castlereagh was found, his throat slit with a pen-knife, dead by his own hand. So it came about that the Duke of Wellington was sent to represent his country at the Congress; and the man who sanctioned his withdrawal from it was not Castlereagh, but his ancient rival and his successor in office, George Canning. Between the new Foreign Secretary and the old there was a more than superficial contrast. Castlereagh, as we have seen, was stolid, obstinate, and taciturn, the typical strong, silent man of British politics. Canning, on the other hand, was gifted with many accomplishments and graces. He had made some mark as an amateur poet. He had a nice vein of humour and had written a series of clever satires for the press. He possessed a charming manner and an exquisite voice; and, above all, he was a powerful orator, equally able to work upon his hearers' feelings or to stamp some brilliant epigram upon their minds. During the course of the Napoleonic wars he had held office under the younger Pitt; of late, however, he had fallen somewhat into the background of English party politics and had determined to take up an appointment in the East. He was on the eve of embarking for India, when he heard of Castlereagh's suicide; and this altered his whole career. He stayed in England; Lord Liverpool, the Premier, made him an offer of the vacant place; and he thereupon became both Foreign Secretary and leader of the Lower House. Canning's mind did not travel in a groove. Though a Tory by upbringing, he saw quite clearly that Toryism itself could go too far; and both at home and abroad he set himself to direct the course of British policy along more liberal lines. The change of attitude which the Cabinet displayed during the five

ensuing years was a proof, not merely of his own imaginative outlook, but also of his ability to carry others with him and to convince less open and less generous minds.

Reforms at Home.—In some of his Tory colleagues, however, Canning was particularly fortunate. There were men among them as alert and as eager for reform as he; and, since home politics were not his special sphere, the credit for such reforms as were effected must go to these colleagues rather than to him. One was Sir Robert Peel, now rising to the vigour of his manhood, a sane, well-balanced mind, not afraid, if honestly convinced, to go back upon a prejudice or admit himself at fault. In Lord Liverpool's new cabinet he undertook the office of Home Secretary, and he began his work by instituting a revision of the antiquated criminal code. His reforms were drastic; in the case of some hundred felonies hitherto punishable with death, he prescribed a milder sentence. Within four years nearly three hundred obsolete Acts were deleted from the Statute Book. The cruel game laws were in part at least rescinded; and the barbarous use of man-traps, used by landlords to catch poachers, was henceforth disallowed. Peel's work brought two advantages. Juries which had hitherto deliberately acquitted, because they felt the penalties to be too strong, were now the more ready to convict a rogue, because they could count upon a punishment more fitted to his crime. But the reform went deeper still; it began to bridge the gulf, now perilously widening, between the poor and rich. Once the law was seen to be founded upon justice and not upon the narrow prejudice of class, the popular resentment began to be appeased; a quieter tone prevailed, and for a while at least the agitations of the previous years died down. This change, however, could scarcely have resulted had it not been for other measures of reform which struck more directly at the root of discontent. To steal or poach is not the habit of the normal man unless he is half-starving; and what people really needed was economic justice as well as political and legal. To give them this was the endeavour of another among Canning's colleagues, William Huskisson by name, who by Lord Liverpool's appointment was made President of the Board of Trade.

Like Peel, Huskisson was remarkably broad-minded for a Tory. He had been a diligent student of economic theories; and contrary to the usual preconceptions of his class he was a believer in Free Trade. The time was not ripe indeed for a full and final acceptance of this great commercial principle; nor is this the moment to describe in detail the tremendous controversy which has raged around the problem. It is enough to state what Huskisson achieved. In the first place, he relaxed the antiquated Navigation Laws, a check laid long ago in Cromwell's time on the access of foreign vessels to the shores of England. Further, he continued the work, which Walpole had begun, of reducing the customs tariff upon imports; and thus soon by these two sound measures he set free the natural flow of raw materials so sorely needed by England's manufacturers. Nor did he neglect the still more urgent question of the

people's food. The oppressive Corn Laws¹ were allowed indeed to stand; but Huskisson was able to modify their rigour by the introduction of a sliding scale, whereby the duty upon grain was lowered as the price of grain rose high. This offered some relief to the hunger of the poor. The worst of their sufferings appeared for the moment to be over. A languishing trade began to thrive again; and, as the flow of imports grew, the prevalence of unemployment was diminished. Thus, under the administration of Peel, Huskisson, and Canning, the credit of British statesmanship was handsomely redeemed. The cloud of revolution, which in 1822 had seemed so threatening and so near, was lifted. Tranquillity, if not contentment, reigned; and this England owed, not to a brutal triumph of unbending force, but to a new spirit of sweet reasonableness and cool commonsense.

Canning and South America.—But it was above all in foreign politics—which were Canning's special sphere—that the fruits of the new Tory enlightenment were most clearly manifest. Not that there was here any instantaneous or startling change of front; it was rather a question of pushing England's previous policy to its logical conclusion. Even Castlereagh himself had been, as we have said, no blind admirer of continental despotism. He had shown plainly on occasion that England could be no party to its wilder schemes; and, if Canning got most of the credit for cutting actually adrift, it was not because he struck out along wholly original lines. Rather it was because he possessed the power which his predecessor lacked, of gauging the European situation at a glance, of determining by a quick decision which way his country's influence should fall, and, above all, of infecting even the stolid British Parliament with his own enthusiastic eagerness to see justice done abroad. When a difficult and complex situation was puzzling duller minds, he would solve all doubts by an unerring diagnosis, and illuminate, as it were, the whole political horizon by the lightning flash of some clear, telling phrase. With such a phrase, for instance, he was now to define England's policy over the most perplexing problem of the day, and even it may be said to fix her foreign policy for a century to come. At the moment of Castlereagh's death the rulers of Europe were much disturbed, as we have seen, over the state of things in Spain. The revolution which had there broken out was a deadly affront to their most cherished principle; and, rather than see a people dictating a constitution to its lawful king, the Powers were determined to restore Ferdinand's authority, even, if need should be, by force of arms. The French were actually preparing to launch an army across the Pyrenees. Canning saw in a flash that such an act of interference was opposed to all English notions of fair play; nor did he hesitate to speak his mind. On the Duke's withdrawal from the Congress of Verona, he declared that intervention in another State's affairs was both "dangerous and useless." "Every nation for itself, and God for all of us" was the keyword of his

¹ The English name for grain and in particular for wheat, is corn.

policy; and upon that principle hereforward the country took its stand. The protest came too late to do Spain much benefit.

The French army set Ferdinand back upon his throne: the democratic constitution was annulled; the revolutionary leaders hanged. Nevertheless England had declared her attitude; and further developments soon made it necessary to define that attitude more sharply, this time with more success. Though King Ferdinand had recovered his position at Madrid, he had still to win back the Spanish colonies in South America which had recently seceded from his crown; and the French were now suggesting that, if the task was undertaken, their services to Ferdinand could not better be repaid than by transferring these possessions to themselves. The idea of the French and Spanish monarchs thus callously bargaining with the liberties of Peru, Mexico, and Chile brought Canning to his feet. He determined to show that his warning against intervention was no bluff. A message was dispatched to inform the two predatory monarchs that, if they attacked the American republics, they would find themselves at war with England too. Nor was Canning's ultimatum a solitary voice. He received invaluable backing from the United States. In a historic pronouncement their President, Monroe, declared that no meddling by European Powers would be tolerated on his side the Atlantic. America henceforward was to be for Americans alone.¹ The effect of Canning's bold stand was instantaneous. The two monarchs knuckled under; and the triumph of his policy was complete. It was a real stroke of imaginative statesmanship to undertake this new responsibility beyond the normal range of England's immediate interests; for it served at once to discredit the dangerous craze for "intervention" and also to remind the interventionists that England was not alone in her defence of freedom. By championing the cause of American democracy, not merely had she struck the most telling blow yet seen to the enemies of democracy in Europe; she had also, as Canning put it in his memorable boast, "called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old."

Greek War of Independence.—Though threat of war had been a useful and perhaps a necessary weapon in the diplomatic duel against France and Spain, yet Canning himself was certainly the last person in the world to wish to use it. His chief desire was to see peace between the nations, nobody meddling in other people's business, and England least of all. But fate was not to be so kind to him again; and, though the American trouble had ended without bloodshed, a crisis presently arose in Eastern Europe in which even Canning himself was compelled to intervene. This time the storm-centre was Greece. Since the Mohammedan invasion at the end of the fourteenth century, the Greek people

¹ Hence arose the celebrated "Monroe Doctrine" which has ever since kept America in isolation from European politics—neither meddling in Europe herself, nor allowing European powers to meddle with her or with Latin America. As a matter of fact, the original declaration was as much a warning to England as to other nations; and Canning himself was none too pleased by it.

had lain under the tyranny of the Turks. What that meant, we have seen, in our own day, in Armenia, in the Balkans, and elsewhere; for the Turk has never abandoned the habits of a foreign conqueror. Though allowed considerable liberty in local administration and in the exercise of their religious faith, the subject population of the Greek peninsula were still at the mercy of their savage rulers, who subjected them to every form of open violence and rapine. Murder or robbery committed by a Turk went habitually unpunished. Extortion of every kind was practised by officials. There was no machinery of justice, no court of appeal. It was therefore not surprising that Greek patriots, inspired by the revolutionary ideals bred in France, should have resolved to strike a blow for liberty. A secret society called the "Hetairia Philikê" had taken the first steps. Fired by the noble traditions of their ancient past, these men made bold in 1821 to raise the standard of revolt. They had slaughtered (often with torture) every Turk they could lay hands on, and for the moment at least the Morea became theirs. The Turks retaliated with a massacre *en masse* of the Greek population in outlying towns and islands; and then had undertaken a regular campaign to recover their hold upon the province.

In England sympathy had run strongly for the Greeks; supplies were privately sent out to them; and amongst others Lord Byron, the poet and author of the celebrated "Isles of Greece," had gone out to their assistance. Byron died of fever in the Missolonghi marshes, before he could render them much service; yet the example of his sacrifice was not merely an inspiration to the Greeks, but a new tie forged between England and their endeavour. As their resistance, weakened too often by disunion, was slowly but decisively worn down, British anxieties became acute. The Sultan had appealed for help to Mehemet Ali, the powerful Viceroy of Mussulman rule in Egypt. A large army and a powerful fleet had been sent across under Ibrahim, the Viceroy's son. In 1827 the Morea was reoccupied and Athens reduced. Canning hitherto had held his hand. He knew that the Russian Tsar, Alexander's less principled successor, was itching to "intervene," not so much with intent to set Greece free as to crush the Turks and absorb their large dominions. This did not by any means suit Canning's book; and he now proposed that Russia, France, and England should intervene conjointly, not to make war upon the Turks, but to mediate as neutrals and to arrange, if possible, a peaceful settlement. An armistice between the belligerents was urged; and a British squadron sent out to watch events. Then a startling thing occurred. The Turkish fleet was anchored in the harbour known in ancient times as Pylos, now Navarino Bay. When Codrington, the British admiral, approached the harbour with a mixed force of British, Russian, and French ships, he had no intention of attack; but a polite request that a Turkish ship should move was met by blank refusal; a boat, put out to cut the vessel's moorings, was received by hostile fire; and within a few minutes the two fleets were at it hammer and tongs. The Turkish ships were simply cut to ribbands;

and, at the end of two hours' bombardment, there was scarcely a single hulk but was either sunk or sinking. Such was the outcome of Canning's "peaceful intervention." The sword had been drawn with a vengeance; and, though Britain now drew back, the Russian Tsar pressed on. It took time, however, to force the Sultan's hand; and it was not till 1830 that the independence of Greece was formally acknowledged and the new State erected under a separate crown.

This consummation Canning himself had not lived long enough to see. In the spring of 1827, upon Lord Liverpool's death, he had become Prime Minister; but his health was already failing. For six months he struggled on. Then on the eve of Navarino he had died; and with his passing the enlightened policy for which he stood passed also. His brief career, though it laid the foundations on which British European policy was afterwards to rest, was regarded by his contemporaries as too risky and adventurous. The zeal he had kindled in others was merely the reflection of his own enthusiasm; and, once the eloquence which had kept the flame alive was gone, the Tory government sank back into the doubtful twilight of its old benighted ways.

III

Wellington and Emancipation.—The truth is that the Tory party's conversion was no better than skin-deep. They could not bring themselves to realize that the world around them was in flux and that, unless they changed as it changed, they would be left behind. The Duke of Wellington, who became Premier after Canning, was a man of this stiff, unbending type. Whatever imagination he possessed for soldiering, he possessed none at all for politics. The news of Navarino filled him with undisguised dismay. The liberties of Greece to his mind meant less than nothing; and the destruction of the Turkish fleet, which rejoiced more generous spirits, was simply (in the famous phrase he used of it) an "untoward incident." So, utterly unconscious of the risks that he was running, this honest, upright, strait-laced, military-minded gentleman blundered back into all the old futilities of narrow Toryism. He dismissed Huskisson and other more progressive members of the cabinet, retaining Peel alone. For the distresses of the country, which were once again becoming dangerously acute, he had no remedy but a rigid enforcement of the law. Acts of robbery, arson, and mob-violence, committed with increasing frequency by hunger-stricken labourers, were met merely by blind repression, police raids, and the Riot Act. Poachers and game-keepers fought battles-royal; but nothing further was done to mitigate the Game Laws. On the contrary, every step was taken to strengthen the Government's hand; the old local provision of beadles, watchmen, and the like was voted inadequate; and through Peel's agency was organised first in London, and in due course all over the country, a new regular constabulary, known as "Bobbies" or "Peelers," after their author's name.

So things went on, till the hero of Waterloo was one of the best hated men in the whole country; and a year or two later an angry London mob actually broke every window in his mansion. Yet, however incapable of seeing a way out of it, the Duke was not insensible to this calamitous condition of affairs. He dreaded above all the idea of civil war; and such a fear it was that drove him to the one generous act of policy which marked the brief period of his power. This was a concession which much against his will he extended to his own countrymen the Irish. After well-nigh thirty years, these unhappy folk were still smarting under the insult of the "Union" which compelled them to look to Westminster and not to Dublin, for government and law. Their grievance, moreover, was rendered the more bitter, because, though a Catholic people in the main, they were precluded by the Test Act from sending a Catholic to Parliament. Pitt, when he passed the Act of Union, had promised them redress; the promise had been falsified and nothing done; but now in 1828 this disability of the Irish electors was thrown suddenly into the limelight in an unexpected fashion.

A vacancy occurring in the seat for County Clare, a certain Roman Catholic named Daniel O'Connell put forward as a candidate, and, as was only natural, he was elected with a big majority. When, however, he arrived in due course at Westminster, the difficulties began. He was told to take the customary oath, refused, and on refusal was ordered to withdraw. A fresh election was then held in County Clare, again O'Connell was a candidate, and again he was triumphant at the polls. Ireland was in a ferment. British opinion was seriously alarmed; and eventually Peel informed his leader that the game was up: it was a choice between open rebellion or retreat. Then the Duke, though hating the necessity, gave way, and a Bill for the "emancipation" of the Catholics was produced. But there was still an obstacle. The King discovered conscientious scruples about signing it, blustered about the binding nature of his coronation oath, vowed that, if further pressed, he would retire to Hanover, and finally dismissed the Cabinet. His Majesty, however, very soon became aware that there was nobody to put into their place. The Duke came back; the Bill was passed, and first among the Catholics to take a seat in Parliament was the twice rejected member for County Clare. The Duke's belated wisdom had saved the land from civil war; but happily its destinies were not to hang much longer upon his slow decisions. It was not often that the death or accession of a Hanoverian sovereign was now a matter of great import to the State; but the sudden collapse of George IV had one most beneficial and far-reaching consequence. It was customary in those days, when a reign ended, to dissolve the existing Parliament. So, when William IV took the crown, Parliament was dissolved. An election followed; and, when the Duke's ministry returned to Westminster, they discovered that the Tory ascendancy was gone. After nearly a quarter of a century of political extinction, the Whigs held the field once more.

CHAPTER III

THE REFORM BILL

I

The Middle Classes.—Had England at the accession of King William IV still been what its continental neighbours mainly were, an exclusively agricultural country, much might have fallen out very differently. There might have been an English Revolution on the model of the French; there might merely have been more riots and more governmental tyranny. There certainly would not have been what actually there was—a great constitutional advance towards true democracy, voluntarily undertaken by the governing class itself. The truth is that, as so often in the course of England's national development, the commercial instincts of her people were now once more to exercise a vital influence upon the growth of their institutions. We have seen already, through the progress of the centuries, that, whereas the agricultural habit led to feudalism and class tyranny, town life and manufacture made in the opposite direction for independence and free thought. It was the townsfolk of southern England who led the van of the Reformation; it was the shopkeepers and merchants who had been the backbone of resistance to the Stuarts; and so now the Industrial Revolution, which had recently cast the whole social life of the people into the melting-pot, was also paving the way for a grand political change. For England was no longer peopled mainly by squires and their dependents; in a hundred thriving cities there was growing up a class—almost unknown as yet in other countries—who were no less important in their way than the great landlords of the shires. Owners of factories and mills and coal mines, controllers of warehouses and joint-stock companies, heads of trading houses, broker firms, and banks—these were the product of a new age of Iron and Steam. That such men were well-to-do goes without saying. Some were rich beyond the dreams of avarice; and step by step, as machinery was improved and production thereby multiplied, from rich they became richer. Yet, however big their incomes or magnificent their mansions, these men were not of the aristocracy itself; many of them had actually risen from the ranks; taken as a whole they were regarded somewhat askance by high society. Engaged as they were in the despised trade of making money (instead of merely receiving it, like gentlemen, in the form of tithes or rents), these men of business were broadly lumped together with the still larger company of clerks, shopkeepers, and tradesfolk as the great Middle Class.

Now the men of the middle class, being dependent for success upon their brains, were sturdy thinkers; and what ideas were running in their heads it is well worth our trouble to enquire. The outstanding feature

of the middle-class creed was the doctrine of Free Trade and all that followed from it. This doctrine had taken its birth towards the close of the preceding century, in the work of the great Scottish political economist, Adam Smith. In a treatise which he called "The Wealth of Nations," Adam Smith had roundly denounced those artificial obstructions to commercial enterprise which were the lingering relic of an age when political economy was little studied and still less understood. The old idea had been, as we have often pointed out, to protect all domestic industries by preventing competition from outside. Thus, until 1770, cotton had been practically excluded from England lest it should prove a fatal rival to her home-grown wool; and thus again more recently the Corn Laws were established to promote the interest of her farming class. Such restrictions, however, Adam Smith declared to be based upon a fallacy. Competition, as he saw it, was the very breath of commercial life and the source of all prosperity. When every nation and every individual are straining their resources to overreach or undersell their neighbours, the result, he argued, would be a maximum of effort, a maximum of production, and consequently at the same time a minimum of cost. Hamper competition, and you inevitably restrict supply; and, as every one knows nowadays, inadequate supply will result in higher prices, whereas abundance will result in low. Adam Smith's theories were taken up by manufacturers, and pressed by them to their most extreme conclusion. His disciples—the men of the "Manchester School," as they were called—went far beyond the prophet. They declared that the only road to prosperity lay in the most ruthless competition; that it was the primary duty of a business man to look to his own interest and to overreach his neighbour, more especially if that neighbour were a poor helpless working man; and that to pay low wages was as much a matter of sound commercial principle as to sell an article for the most that it would bring. Even if the poor man might suffer in the process, he would gain, so they maintained, in the long run; for through such unfettered and unlicensed competition would arise a prosperity in which all alike would share.—"Every man for himself, and God for all of us" might have been their parody of Canning's famous cry.

Whatever the merits or shortcomings of this theory, it was at least progressive, and the middle class of the towns was not a class to lag behind. Nor, hard and inhuman as the theory must appear, were its disciples so utterly indifferent to the condition of the masses. Their behaviour doubtless varied; and most employers were hard taskmasters. But they lived at closer quarters to their underlings than did the big landlords of the country-side; and some at any rate among them felt that there was somehow something wrong. They did not, of course, admit that the fault lay with themselves or with their theory. They preferred after the British manner to put the blame on Parliament. The close oligarchy of squires who ruled at Westminster were simply ruling in the interest of a decaying caste. They did not understand the needs of the whole nation, because they did not represent the nation

X as a whole. The remedy for present discontents was therefore to reform the methods of election, to admit a wider circle to the franchise, and, taking away its member from some sleepy agricultural hamlet, to transfer the privilege to some thriving populous manufacturing town. That was the plain commonsense of a dangerous situation, as the ordinary level-headed Englishman conceived of it. There were others, however, less easily satisfied and less moderate in their views—men who had been deeply stirred by the wrongs and miseries they saw around them, men who still regarded the French Revolution as the greatest and best event that had ever happened in the world, and who were even ready to turn England upside down for the sake of setting existing wrongs to right. Such thinkers were not common; they were working often alone or in small groups; they were regarded by most with horror or with pity, and talked of as “Radicals” who wanted to reform the social order by digging up its “roots.” But such talk as theirs was only to be expected from the mouths of philanthropists or cranks; and the majority of thinking Englishmen were perfectly assured that the roots of society were well enough. There was perhaps a bough here that needed trimming, or a rotten branch there that needed lopping back; but that was all. The English middle class was far too prosperous to demand heroic measures. Reform, if reform were needed, must at least come “bit by bit.”

✓ Now of this wider and more moderate body of opinion, which we have called the middle class, the Whig party was in some degree a mirror. True, Whig statesmen differed but little in their personal character or social standing from the Tory statesmen who opposed them in the House. They too were for the most part landowners; they too were educated at the Public School and University; and, if anything, they were even more haughty and self-important than their rivals. But the whole historical tradition of their party made the Whigs more dependent than the Tories on the middle classes’ vote, and therefore more sympathetic to middle-class ideals. When in the reign of Charles II Shaftesbury had founded the Green Ribbon Club from which they took their origin, the principles for which he and his followers had stood were liberty of life for the subject, religious freedom for all sects, and strict limitation of the Crown’s authority. For support they had looked above all to the commercial classes, to the men who had fought with Cromwell against the double tyranny of Church and King. And now, though times had greatly changed since Shaftesbury’s day, and though of their three great principles the last two were solidly established, the Whigs still remained in theory the champion of the people’s liberty and the allies of the commercial middle class. Their doctrines were vague; but they were prepared to “trust the people.” They were bound by no such selfish prejudice as made the Tories cling like limpets to the old régime. They were prepared, if need be, to fling open the markets to Free Trade and to sacrifice the interests of the landlord class. Above all they were prepared for the reform of Parliament; and, when

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in the first year of William IV they at length returned to office, it was to the reform of Parliament that they directed their first thoughts.

II

Need for Parliamentary Reform.—That the system of Parliamentary election then in vogue was hopelessly out of date is obvious. If the franchise had merely remained what it had been in the days of the Plantagenets, it would have been bad enough. But things were worse than that; for during the eighteenth century a withering blight had come over the politics of England. Till then no money value had been attached to votes; those who possessed the privilege had therefore no particular inducement to keep others out of it, and most independent persons who owned a piece of land or a house worth anything might be electors. When, however, the Whigs of Walpole's day began the evil practice of buying people's votes, it was a very different matter. Then, as was natural, those who possessed it strove to keep the valuable privilege exclusively to themselves, or parted with it only for a good round sum. Thus, while the population of the country was steadily increasing, the number of voters grew rather less than more. In some towns the mayor and corporation had gained the sole right of electing the borough member. In other constituencies the right was vested in the owners of particular properties or fields. In the notorious instance of Old Sarum, for example, there remained no inhabitants at all; and the right of election belonged to the happy owner of a single piece of plough. Elsewhere the local magnate had bought up all such property as carried a vote with it, and so had the constituency, as the phrase ran, in his "pocket." Thus there were earls and dukes who could claim as their own more than half a dozen seats in the House of Commons and who filled them with creatures of their choice; and so it came about that of some five hundred English members barely a man was in any way representative of the people itself; three hundred, it was reckoned, had actually been elected by one hundred and sixty persons all told; and this out of a total population of nearly fifteen millions.

In Scotland things were even worse than in England. There, some thirty individuals chose the man to represent the 160,000 inhabitants of Edinburgh; and in the Island of Bute we are told of a solitary voter who appointed himself chairman at his own election meeting, proposed and seconded his own nomination to the seat, and then solemnly proceeded to announce himself returned by his own unanimous vote. Such a state of things would in itself have been sufficiently ridiculous, supposing the distribution of the population to have remained constant. But, as a result of the Industrial Revolution, a great shifting had occurred towards the north and west, and, while vast hordes of workers were collected in the manufacturing towns of Lancashire or Warwick, the little market boroughs of the eastern and southern shires dwindled

into insignificance. Yet these retained the right of sending their representative to Parliament, while the new towns still went memberless. Can it be wondered that the populace was restive or that they felt the historic birthright of self-government, for which their forefathers had fought and died, to have been filched away from them! Had the Whigs not come to office or the Reform Bill not seen light, it is not too much to say that blood would have flowed in England before many years were out.

Lord Grey's Plans.—Such, then, was the cause in which the Whigs were now preparing to do battle and to tilt against the serried ranks of reactionary Toryism. The lists were ready for the great tournament of parties; the champions were arrayed. Lord Grey as Premier undertook the leading of the House of Lords. In the Commons he chose as his lieutenant Lord John Russell, an able young enthusiast of noble birth, who combined a generous liberality of outlook with a singular power of clear, incisive speech. Lord John could well be trusted, if any man could, to pilot the Bill through the many shoals and pitfalls of that critical assembly; but it was first of prime importance that the Cabinet itself should be united upon the details of the Bill to be produced. There were many heart-searchings over various points. Secret ballot was proposed only to be rejected. Ministers were agreed that the franchise must be opened to a far wider circle of the people, but hesitated where to draw the line. Eventually, however, a certain unanimity was reached; and the proposed reforms were drafted, of which the main were these: *first*, every householder whose holding should be rated as worth £10 a year was henceforth to have a vote; *second*, the entire distribution of Parliamentary seats was to be reorganized; on the one hand, all boroughs of less than two thousand inhabitants were to lose their member altogether, while boroughs of four thousand and under were to be allowed a single member but no more; on the other hand, new members were to be allotted to the increasingly important, but hitherto unrepresented, populations of the great industrial towns. These, along with other proposals which here may be neglected, formed the contents of the Bill.

Its secret was well kept; and outside the members of the Cabinet itself not a soul knew what was coming when on 1 March, 1831, the Commons met to hear it read for the first time. Crowds were assembled in the street outside, and the scene within was one of unparalleled excitement. There were cheers from the Whig benches as the diminutive Lord John rose to the table and bit by bit with cool deliberation unfolded the secret of the ministerial plan. Then, as he proceeded, by request, to read the long list of the disfranchised boroughs, sardonic, mocking laughter came from the members whose seats were singled out by the reformers for political extinction. The rage of the Tories knew no bounds; they were still almost equal to the Whigs in numbers; and, when Lord John had finished, they opened a heavy bombardment upon the whole principle of the Bill. Arguments of every sort and kind were

adduced against it. Sir Robert Peel declared that the old system was the only method of securing Parliamentary seats for the rising talent of the day, the Pitts, the Burkes, the Cannings. Inglis, the member for Oxford University, went further still in his denunciations. He denied that representation of the people had ever been the theory of election. It was for the King to nominate, or to place the power of nomination in whatever hands he chose. The best men should be sent to Parliament; and hitherto, however chosen, the best men had been sent. That was perhaps a moderately true statement of the past; but in 1831 its truth was beginning to be more than doubtful. "The best men" had bungled things too grievously of late; and the force of the argument was spent. Despite these vigorous onslaughts from the Tory benches, the First Reading of the Bill was passed through without a vote.¹ But the division taken at the Second Reading soon made it clear to every eye that the Government was without sufficient backing in the House and must either yield or fall. That was a tremendous and memorable scene. The House was crowded to overflowing; and so equally divided were the members that nobody could even make a guess whether "Ayes" or "Noes" would have it. As the numbers were read out, says Macaulay, who was present, a sudden silence fell; "you could have heard a pin drop." 302 voted for the Bill; 301 against it. "Then we shook hands and clapped each other on the back and went out laughing and crying and huzzaing into the lobby." But, though saved, as it were, by the skin of their teeth, the Whigs' triumph could not last. When the Bill came under discussion clause by clause before the third and final reading, a wrecking amendment brought a Government defeat, and Grey resigned. The King came down in person; Parliament was dissolved; and the country was in the throes of an election once again. Yet, truth to tell, this was the best thing that could have happened for the Whigs. The people were now with them heart and soul; and, when they came back to Westminster, there were to be no more divisions with a bare majority of one.

The Country Backs the Bill.—When hopes are aroused, as they had been by the Reform Bill, the British people is not easily baulked of its desire. The country was boiling over with excitement and enthusiasm. The whole middle class, from the big capitalist at the top to the humble clerk at the bottom, was solid for the Whigs. Even many of the country squires were shaken in their allegiance to the Tory faith. The "Radical" reformers, regarding the Reform Bill as a first instalment of their own more sweeping plans, backed it with all their might; and, though it offered to the masses no actual prospect of a vote, the

¹ There are three stages in the discussion of a Bill. The first reading merely admits it for discussion by the House; at this stage there is rarely a debate and nowadays never a division. Then, before a division is taken on the second reading, the *principle* of the Bill is discussed. If that principle is accepted and the Bill thus "read" a second time, the third stage follows. The contents of the Bill are debated by the House "in Committee" clause by clause; and then in its final form it is read for the third time and the last.

interest of the working men was none the less aroused. In such an atmosphere bribery and the bad old tradition of the hustings went for nothing. Tenants voted Whig in flat defiance of their landlords' threats. The Tory candidates were hooted, burnt in effigy, and scarcely permitted to show their face in public. The upshot was that the Whigs returned to Parliament with a clear majority of 136. The Bill was now certain of passing the Lower House; but there were innumerable delays. As the debate in Committee went forward, amendment after amendment was suggested with no other purpose than to give trouble and waste time. The Tory rank and file were adepts at such tactics. Wetherell, the member for Bristol, gained unenviable fame as an obstructionist; and even Peel himself lent his support to mean endeavours to destroy or alter each successive clause. But the country was behind Lord Grey and Lord John Russell, intent upon "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill." The Whigs, knowing this, stuck bravely to their guns; and at length by a snatch vote, taken when most of the Tory protagonists were absent, the Third Reading was passed. The Bill was through the Commons; what would be its fate with the Lords?

The Lords Reject the Bill.—Unhappily in the Lords the Tory element was not merely strong, but overwhelming. Led by the Duke of Wellington himself, they refused all argument of reason. Lord Grey's eloquence and the prayers of the Whig Chancellor, who, some say, went down upon his very knees to move them, were alike quite unavailing. In the early hours of 8 October, 1831, the Reform Bill was thrown out by 43 votes. There is probably no moment in recent history when Britain came so near to civil war as in the weeks that followed. If the people were excited at the time of the election, they were worse than excited now. The unpopular member for Bristol, on paying a visit to the town, was compelled to flee for safety over the house-tops. Notorious enemies of the Bill were pelted in their coaches, dragged from their horses, and made to go in terror of their lives. At Birmingham a monster meeting of a hundred thousand persons met in solemn protest against the action of the Lords. There was open talk of arming; and workmen's associations bought guns and began to drill. The outlook day by day grew more ominous and more critical; but to his eternal credit Lord Grey kept his head. He determined to give the Peers an opportunity to go back upon their blunder by offering them the Bill a second time. If only to save their faces, he was prepared to make concessions; so he changed some unimportant details here and there; and the Bill in its altered form was carried through the Commons before the year was out. The question now in everybody's mind was, Would the Lords swallow the sugar-coated pill, and, if they would not, what then? On 7 May, 1832, the Lords for the second time cast their vote against Reform, and for a second time Lord Grey resigned.

The crisis had arrived. The King sent to call Wellington. If the Duke had taken office, the consequences no longer stood in doubt. The country was quiet; but it was the hush of a people determined how to

act. London and the big towns were simultaneously to rise. All public offices and banks were to be closed; and the Duke's Government to be dared to do its worst. But, as over the crisis of Irish Emancipation, the Duke's iron nerve had failed. His Government to be was never formed. The King called Lord Grey to power again; and this time Grey came armed with a new weapon of offence. Throughout the previous weeks a bitter struggle had been going on between the Premier and the King. Grey had striven to extort a promise, that, if the Lords continued their resistance, new peers should be created in sufficient numbers to swamp their majority against the Bill. The King was tough, and for weeks he had refused to make the promise Grey demanded; but on 18 May he yielded. Once it was known that the Whigs had this new weapon at their command, the Tory obstinacy broke down. Most of the Bill's opponents abstained from voting altogether; and on 4 June it was passed for good and all by a clear majority of 80. So ended the great contest between the Peerage and the People, as the famous duel ended between the old lady's mop and the ocean. "The Atlantic was roused. Mrs. Partington's spirit was up. But I need not tell you the contest was unequal. The old lady was excellent at a slop or a puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest. The Atlantic beat Mrs. Partington."¹ And the People had beaten the Peers.

Effects of the Reform Bill.—By the Reform Bill's passage in 1832 England took a long step nearer to democracy; but she did not thereby arrive at democracy itself. There still remained two classes, a class which governed and had votes, and a class which was governed and had none; and of the two the latter class was out of all proportion the more numerous. Under the new conditions only the householder of a £10 yearly rating² was entitled to the franchise. This, it has been reckoned, gave the vote to little more than one-twentieth of the whole population—the comfortable and well-to-do, tradesmen, business men, or farmers, folk who kept a parlour and perhaps a maid. The working man who paid but a weekly shilling or two for his cheap pigsty of a cottage was shut out. The Reform Bill, in short, was passed, and was intended to be passed, for the advantage not of the lower, but of the middle class. The middle class had been taken into voluntary partnership by the aristocracy; and the two together were able for half a century and more to hold their own against the rising tide of Labour. The real consequence of the Reform was, as we now see it, a social fusion of the landed gentry with the manufacturing and commercial orders. Bit by bit, men who had been regarded as upstarts and outsiders began to be admitted to the country seats of the nobility or the drawing-rooms of Park Lane.

From this social fusion issued that interesting and novel type, the

¹ Quoted from Sydney Smith, a Somersetshire parson.

² In the county constituencies (as opposed to the towns) the £10 limit applied only to *long* leases; nothing less than a £50 holding was sufficient, if the house was held upon a *yearly* lease.

mid-Victorian gentleman—rich from the proceeds of a thriving trade; hard in his business dealings, as befitted a disciple of old Adam Smith; honest according to his lights, strict and strait-laced in his personal behaviour, easily shocked, an heir to the Puritan tradition to which the middle class had all along held firm; something of a snob, contemptuous of the lower class beneath him, and intensely jealous of his own position in genteel society; possessing some veneer at any rate of culture, and eager to fill his home with the best that money could buy, but execrable in his taste for architecture, furniture, or pictures; fond of talking about fine ideals, less fond perhaps of putting them to practice; sentimental, self-satisfied, well-meaning, but always with an eye on the main chance.

Victorian society was a curious and contradictory mixture. If it had many virtues, it had vices too; and both in the main came into it along with that great influx of energetic, money-making people, whom the Whigs had called in from the new commercial order “to redress the balance of the old.” In the sphere of actual politics the results of the Reform were less apparent. Whatever its supporters may have expected of the Bill, it did, in fact, but little to change the character of the Lower House. Members were very much the same before and after, products of an aristocratic education, generally, if not always, of aristocratic birth. Yet beneath the surface there was a more subtle change. The same faces might indeed be seen on the Whig and the Tory benches; but it was not the same power that put them there. Whether Inglis was right or wrong in his theory of election, the fact remains that members in the past had in no real sense been responsible to the People. Now, they were responsible to at least one section of it. Representation had become an actuality. Democracy was in sight; and it only needed the further forward steps, taken in the successive Acts of 1867, 1885, and 1917, to establish a system of universal suffrage and so complete the process begun in 1832. Parliament was one thing before the Reform Bill, quite a different thing after it; and, as though it were to mark symbolically the great change which had arrived, fate now doomed to destruction the venerable palace in which through nearly five hundred years the Houses of Parliament had met. In 1834 a disastrous fire broke out among the buildings; and, excepting the great Fourteenth Century Hall which still survives, everything was gutted. The present building, like the present Parliament, was raised on the foundations of the old.

CHAPTER IV

THE RULE OF THE WHIGS

When the King affixed his signature to the Reform Bill and the Bill thereby became an Act, its enemies were more than confident in their prediction of untold and irretrievable disaster. Power was about to be

placed in raw, unpractised hands. Wild radical experiments were sure to follow fast; nobody perhaps could tell to what lengths "reform" might go; but, as like as not, the new democracy would proceed to make England a Republic, and the King be found to have signed unwittingly the warrant for the extinction of his crown. At best, the Parliament of the new order would be an unstable, unpractical assembly, as little capable of prudent legislation as some think a Labour Government would be to-day. Such gloomy prophecies proved wholly false. The character of Parliament for many years to come remained, as we have said, pretty much the same as it had been before; and, so far from giving substance to their opponent's fears, the policy of the Whigs was to prove a bitter disappointment to their own more eager followers. The fact is that with the passage of the great reform the impulse of their enthusiasm was almost spent. From now onwards until 1841 they enjoyed a period of unchallenged power, first under the leadership of Lord Grey himself, then after 1837 of Lord Melbourne. Such a chance was offered them as rarely falls to the lot of any party; but they failed upon the whole to make good use of it. They passed two or three most salutary measures; they set a few of the more glaring scandals right; but there the impetus was stayed. They felt that for the present they had gone far enough. The courage and the energy were lacking to undertake a thorough overhauling of the rusty, inefficient machinery of State. Even the Corn Laws, the most cruel of all injustices, were left untouched.

Character of Palmerston.—The policy of the Whigs, to put it in a word, was not so much an adventure into unknown paths, but a cautious continuation of the ideals of Canning. In foreign policy especially they upheld the principles which he had planted. Peace between the nations, liberty for each to manage its own affairs, and immunity from outside interference, that was their watchword as it had been his. Nor did such a policy require so brave an effort, as it had done in the past. England's withdrawal from the European Concert was now more or less complete; and amongst other things the Whigs' task was greatly simplified by a fortunate accident of the royal succession. When in 1837 King William IV died, the crown went in absence of male heirs to his young niece Victoria. Now, by the ancient Salic Law of German States, no woman was allowed to rule in Hanover. That country, therefore, held since the days of George I under the same Crown as England, now severed all connection with this island; and with that severance England's most immediate point of contact with the affairs of Europe was automatically broken. England's interests beyond the Channel were no longer territorial; she was free henceforward to plough a lonely furrow, and to pursue her chosen course without hindrance or restraint. Yet, unhampered though it might be by direct material ties, her foreign policy was by no means one of selfish isolation. Even before the accession of Victoria the Whig statesmen suffered from no narrowness of outlook, least of all their Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston.

Palmerston, after Canning, was England's greatest Foreign Minister

of the century. Canning's keen insight and sparkling originality he could not perhaps equal; but for sheer brute strength of will power few could touch him. To the outward eye, a hearty, genial, popular, and somewhat flippant gentleman, much at home in the drawing-rooms or the clubs of fashionable society, and playing, characteristically enough, "a bold flukey hand at billiards," he yet could throw into the business of his office more force and energy than ten ordinary men. Fearless to the utmost limits of audacity and incorrigibly rash, he cared not a fig for any soul alive. He would send off dispatches of the most tremendous import without the leave or knowledge of his chief; he would speak his mind straight out to foreign statesmen till they knew not whether to dislike or fear him most; while every one was saying that a thing could not be done, Palmerston went and did it; and, with an almost uncanny succession of good fortune, the sequel always proved him in the right. His policy made Britain, as he intended that it should, the most powerful influence in Europe, the champion (armed if need be) in the cause of liberty and justice, and the pacific arbiter in many a hot dispute. He came at an apt moment. Europe was still in a deplorable condition. The yeast of revolution had not yet ceased working, nor the reactionary despots trying to batter it down. Palmerston was determined to bring order out of this chaos and to allow the continental democrats at least fair play.

In this endeavour he was greatly aided by the recent development in France. There the members of the restored Bourbon dynasty—Louis XVIII till 1824 and Charles X thenceforward—had foolishly outstripped the bounds of the people's patience. Not content with reinforcing the despotic rule of King Ferdinand at Madrid, they had pursued a similar policy at home. Step by step the work of the Revolution had been sedulously undone. The laws had been remodelled; the royalist nobles reinstalled. The Catholic Church restored to something of its old authority; the freedom of the Press curtailed. In 1830 Paris rose; the streets were barricaded; Charles X was conducted to the coast; and the tricolour was hoisted at the Hôtel de Ville. Louis Philippe, a prince of the blood royal, but a man of wide experience and democratic sympathies, was set on the vacant throne. Thus, once again within a generation, France had stood out for liberty, and had blown into thin air the principles laid down by the conservative Congress of Vienna. Metternich and his friends were nervous and annoyed, but impotent to act; and, with the best grace that they could muster, the Powers had accepted the accomplished fact. For England, however, it was different. Even the Tories had smiled on the event; and to the new Whig Ministry the return of France to democratic ways was particularly welcome. So before long the old fox Talleyrand, now a man of seventy-six, "pale as a corpse and frightfully wrinkled," but still, as ever, on the winning side, was engaged in helping Palmerston to uphold the cause of liberty, and to undo some portion of the very work which not twenty years before he himself had watched doing at Vienna.

Belgium, France, and England.—Chief perhaps among the failures of that Congress had been the union forcibly imposed upon the Dutch and Belgian States. Between these two peoples there had long existed a violent antipathy. The Belgians resented bitterly their subordination to the King of Holland. Their national pride rebelled against the effort to supplant their native language by the Dutch. Their Catholic sentiments, though toleration had been granted, were outraged by subjection to a Protestant régime. In 1830 they, too, had played their stroke. They had flung out the Dutch soldiery from Brussels and declared themselves thenceforward an independent State. Looking for allies at this crisis of their destiny, they had found a ready listener in the new "People's King" of France. Louis Philippe had backed them, naturally eager to support a cause so nearly related to his own, and at the same time anxious to win back under French influence this vital border-state. He had even at one time lent ear to the proposal that his own son, the Duc de Nemours, should fill the Belgian throne; and, as the Dutch were still intransigent and refused to yield their claims, he in his turn looked round him for an ally to assist his policy. An appeal was made to England; and England did not fail. Palmerston, like Canning, believed in the national ideal; and, seeing how closely England's own interests were concerned in this neighbouring seaboard State, he resolved that Belgium should henceforth be independent in fact as well as name. He would not hear of a French candidate for the vacant Belgian throne; and with characteristic courage he put his foot down firmly on the project. Louis Philippe yielded; and, this done, the two proceeded to enforce a peaceful settlement. The first step was to recover Antwerp, which the Dutch had seized; and hither a French army was dispatched, while a British fleet sailed up the River Scheldt. Antwerp fell; the Belgian soil was freed; and it now remained to guarantee its safety for the future. The negotiations were exceedingly prolonged; but at length in 1839 a historic treaty was drawn up in London whereby Belgium was established as a free and neutral State in perpetuity—neutral towards others, and as such no less to be observed by them. The treaty received the signature of all the Powers, and among them the signatures of Austria and of Prussia. Thus Palmerston's diplomacy had helped to break the back of the continental conspiracy against the liberty of peoples. He had intervened to uphold the rights of nationality which others had intervened so frequently to crush; and the neutrality of Belgium remained the lasting monument of his successful handiwork, until the day when seventy-five years later the Central Powers again conspired to violate those frontiers and to tear up the "scrap of paper" which had received their solemn signature in 1839.

The "Entente Cordiale," which throughout the Belgian crisis had held England and France so well at one, was soon to be subjected, as events will show, to a much more searching test. Palmerston, according to his habit, proceeded on his way, prancing and triumphant, like a

high-mettled horse, and utterly regardless on whose feelings he might trample. He took up the people's cause in both Portugal and Spain, supporting the two popular queen heirs against their two despotic uncles, Don Miguel and Don Carlos, sending out a British admiral to beat the former off Cape St. Vincent, and allowing a number of British officers to enlist as volunteers against the latter. In either case events proved Palmerston as usual to have backed not merely the more righteous, but the winning cause.

Meanwhile, however, a cloud was rising in the Middle East which gave more serious trouble. The Turkish Empire was then, as ever since, in a frail and tottering condition. Russia was watching with a jealous eye its approaching dissolution, and was ready to step in at any moment as heir to the "Sick Man's" coveted dominions. To such aggrandizement of Russian power Palmerston, however, was stubbornly opposed. He maintained that with careful nursing the "Sick Man" might recover, and, so far as English backing could secure it, he was resolved to keep the Turkish Empire whole. In 1840 the call arrived for action. Mehemet Ali, the semi-independent viceroy of the Mussulmans in Egypt, had rebelled against the Sultan, his nominal chief. He had laid hands on Syria, defeated a Turkish army sent against him, and was now even threatening to march westwards against Constantinople itself. Palmerston did not hesitate. A naval force was hurried to the Syrian coast. Acre was bombarded with English guns, and taken; and Mehemet Ali was compelled to sue for terms. All this, however, was done in the teeth of most violent opposition from the French. Bitter jealousies existed over the fate of the Levant, and France, who coveted Egypt for herself, was seriously alarmed lest England should get her foot in first. Louis Philippe threatened war, and talked bombastically of "unmuzzling the tiger." Palmerston laughed, and, though his nervous friends besought him to be careful, took no notice of the threat; and once again his confidence was justified. The French talk proved empty bluff. They sullenly watched England bolster up the Turkish power without so much as stirring a finger; and the next time that the "Sick Man" needed the assistance of his friends in Western Europe, Palmerston was able to send a British army to the Crimea with Frenchmen marching at its side.

Whigs Reform Poor Law.—The affair of Mehemet Ali rang down the curtain, for a time at least, on Palmerston's activities; for within six months of it the Whig Ministry was out. Since the days of the Reform Bill their popularity had been slowly on the wane. The bright hopes of better things, which the grand experiment had raised, went unfulfilled; and the Whig Ministers themselves, as though exhausted by the effort, had lost touch with the national demand. Yet for all that these years were not entirely barren. Something at least had been done for the betterment of England; and two measures in particular stand out. First had been undertaken a reform of the old Poor Law, an antiquated, much mismanaged system, a relic of far-off Elizabethan

days. The provision then made for the relief (out of the rates) of the sick and needy and "unemployable" had in recent years been notoriously abused. Wherever workmen's wages were too low to support life, it had become the common practice to allow them also relief out of the rates, supplementing their pittance by a weekly dole. The result was that the farmers, knowing this, had deliberately abstained from raising wages; and the number of paupers, dependent upon charity, had steadily increased, until a large proportion of the able-bodied workers had come (as the phrase goes) "on the parish." This scandalous system the Whigs ended once for all. They restricted the payment of such charitable doles to genuine cases of incapacity or sickness. For the able-bodied who could obviously work, but for one reason or another did not do so, they established a new remedy—the workhouse,¹ where board and lodging were provided gratis in return for the compulsory performance of some menial task. In every district the parishes combined to erect a "Union" house; and, since it was a part of the Governmental scheme to deter the able-bodied from recourse to such assistance, special care was taken to render these institutions as uncomfortable and disagreeable as might be. Herded together in unwholesome, squalid quarters, fed on a diet that was only fit for pigs, bullied by the beadle and despised by all, the miserable inmates were there intended to appreciate the error of their ways and to see how great were the advantages of a life of honest toil. Such being their intention, there is no doubt the authorities succeeded. Few entered a workhouse who could by any means keep out of it, and those who did were generally the victims of some cruel and inevitable fate—workmen thrown out of employment and through no fault of their own, compelled to tramp the roads, orphans, like *Oliver Twist*, cast homeless on the world, aged folk whom the grudging weekly pittance, still paid to the incapable out of the parish rates, was altogether insufficient to maintain. The Poor Law of the Whigs may have marked some real improvement on the bad system of the past; it may have been a necessary step of slow transition to a time when the problems of poverty would be better understood; but, whatever else the reform may have accomplished, it did nothing to endear its authors to the hearts of the English poor.

The Corporation Act.—Nor was the other measure which was passed during these years any genuine solution of the prevailing discontents. The Act which reorganised the self-government in towns was in itself a useful piece of legislation. The "Corporations," which had come in mediæval times and onwards to control the management of local politics, were in the main self-constituted bodies. In the majority of townships a ring of leading tradesmen—heirs by descent of the powerful Merchant Guilds of long ago—kept all in their own hands, filled up their number at their own discretion, and administered affairs to their

¹ To be strictly accurate, local authorities had here and there provided work-houses as early as the seventeenth century; but towards the end of the eighteenth their use had been confined to provision for the aged and infirm.

own personal advantage. Their sessions were held in secret; they were answerable to none for anything they did; they spent the ratepayer's money without asking his approval; and, after the corrupt fashion of the day, themselves absorbed a goodly portion of the public funds. Such a state of affairs was scarcely to be tolerated by a party which had recently applied the principle of self-government to Parliament; and it stands to their credit that the Whigs brought it to an end.

By the so-called "Corporation Act" of 1835 they made the future governors of towns responsible to the citizens themselves. The town councillors henceforward were compelled to seek election at stated intervals. The mayor, chosen from their own number by the members of the council, was thus also indirectly dependent on the ratepayers' support. In a word, the whole policy of local administration was now to be controlled, not by a small minority of selfish individuals, but by the public at large. This was of great and manifest importance at a time when the towns were every year becoming larger. By-laws were needed to regulate all manner of new details. Schemes for lighting or for sanitation were soon to be more seriously considered; and it was to the mayor and corporation that the towns now looked for the manifold improvements they so sorely needed. If therefore there was still much discreditable slackness or, what is worse, much actual dishonesty and graft, the citizens at least held the method of redress in their own hands. They could punish inefficiency by refusing re-election. Nevertheless the public were very slow to use their power; few took the trouble to exercise their municipal vote; nor must we imagine that in a half-educated country even the most complete self-government could ever do much good. The "Corporation Act" meant little to the masses. It did not clothe the naked body or fill the hungry mouth; the poor were just as wretched as they were before. The fact is that, the Whig Ministry having been raised to power by middle class support, their legislation was from first to last a middle-class affair. Middle-class guardians administered the Poor Law; and middle-class town councillors enjoyed the privilege of ordering the lower class about. That was what Whig Reform had meant in practice; and it is little wonder that the nation as a whole was disappointed. In dealing with the real distress of the majority the Whigs had lamentably failed.

Abolition of Slavery.—Their failure was only rendered the more tragic by other evidence they gave that they at any rate meant well. One splendid act of genuine enlightenment was carried in these years, one which, however, had no immediate bearing on these problems in England herself—the emancipation of the negro slave. Already before the end of the previous century the compassion of Englishmen had been stirred by the pleading of Wilberforce and others. In 1807 a law had been passed against the Slave Trade, and the traffic in kidnapped natives from the western coast of Africa had practically stopped. Nevertheless in the West Indian plantations multitudes of miserable creatures were still working under the lash; and British colonials were

not unnaturally reluctant to forego the obvious advantages of their cheap labour. No little friction therefore was experienced in this quarter, when the liberation of the negroes was proposed. The Whigs, however, were not to be denied. They voted a huge sum of twenty million pounds to compensate the owners, and ordered that the slaves should be set free. Thus by an act of real self-sacrifice England's fair name for liberty was signally upheld, and a great question solved in her West Indian possessions, which the United States upon the mainland did not even dare to face for another quarter of a century, and then decided only after four years of civil war.

Yet, while so much was being done for these black slaves overseas, little was thought and still less said about the white industrial drudges in England. The Whigs, whatever their virtues, were more theorists and philosophers than true philanthropists. Their heads were so full of lofty sentiments about the Rights of Man that they could spare no thought for the women and young children who were toiling for intolerable hours, by night as well as day, in the mines and cotton mills of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Scandals and abuses then went on of which the bare recountal would now shock us beyond words, but which in those days were regarded as a mere matter of due course. The public conscience was not yet properly awakened; and the statesmen who were more callous than the rest of their contemporaries, simply thought in terms of politics and not in terms of life. When starving men were asking them for bread, they talked big about the Vote; and after a brief period of encouragement men's hopes of Whig idealism died down again. The Reform Bill had done nothing for their miseries. Instead of a governing class of landed gentlemen, it had given them a governing class of manufacturers and landed gentlemen combined. That was all; and in the moment of their bitter disillusionment the last state seemed perhaps almost worse than the first.

CHAPTER V

THE WORKERS ORGANIZE

Radicals and Socialists.—"This is certainly the happiest country in the world," said some sarcastic person at the time of the Whigs' fall, "for nobody wants anything"; and there was a grim truth behind the saying. Nobody appeared to want anything, for the very simple reason that nobody could afford it. There was no demand for labour, because industry was slack; industry was slack, because there was no demand for goods; and once again there was no demand for goods, because, when men are out of work, they get no wage. Caught in that vicious circle of stagnation, the country was heading straight for ruin. Things went from bad to worse. The year 1842 was a record year for

pauperism and crime—this after a decade of Whig administration; and already the people had begun to realise that neither party in the House of Commons was likely to do anything for them. *There was nothing for it therefore but to do something for themselves.* Yet there were immense obstacles across their path; and of these the worst beyond a doubt was lack of education.¹ The mass of the labouring class were quite unlettered; and they had little opportunity to learn. There was no national system of elementary schools, no law compelling children to attend what schools there were. So millions of men could neither read nor write; and for such to organise effectively was well-nigh impossible. Whatever efforts were made in that direction were therefore half-crippled at the start by blank ignorance and all the short-sightedness and folly which usually attend it.

Nevertheless there were not wanting leaders, if the mass would follow. There were men—middle-class enthusiasts for the most part, but sometimes even of the working-class itself—who had been roused to thought by the miseries around them, and who since the beginning of the century had stood out as preachers of revolutionary gospels or as spokesmen of the popular demands. The great national upheaval which had occurred in neighbouring France had exercised a profound influence upon such thinkers. Some had even studied the treatises of Rousseau, and preached in their turn the doctrine of Liberty, Equality, and the Brotherhood of man. Among these, Tom Paine, the tobaccoist philosopher, was perhaps the most notorious. The publication of his book—“*The Rights of Man*”—had filled the authorities with wild alarm. The book had been laid under a ban; men were actually transported for the crime of selling it; and Paine himself was forced to flee the country. He went to Paris and served in the Convention under Robespierre, fell into disfavour and was put in prison, finally in 1802 left France for North America, where he subsequently died, a victim, so his enemies declared, to the kindred vices of atheism and drink. Yet Paine’s example fired other rebel spirits. Pamphlets were written to spread their dangerous views, and despite the vigilance of the police were circulated widely. Wild schemes were spun for wholesale Socialist reform, the abolition of all private property, and the levelling of all classes to an equal plane. Secret societies were formed in towns where men read revolutionary essays and vowed with clenched fists to take vengeance for their wrongs. A few, more practically minded than the rest, attempted to make some small beginnings of reform by experiments of their own. One such was Robert Owen, the famous philanthropist of Lanark on the Clyde. He had risen from the humble post of a draper’s shop assistant to be manager and part-owner of a mill. The opportunity was thus afforded him of putting his ideals into practice. He made a careful study of the life of the mill-hands, and attempted in whatever way he could to render it more human. He cut down the hours of work to reasonable limits, established a school for the use of his employees, and set up a shop where they could pur-

chase goods on the co-operative plan.¹ The experiment was an astonishing success. The model factory at Lanark was soon famous the world over. Visitors came from all parts to inspect it; and, when in America men talked of founding a Socialist settlement, Owen was consulted about drawing up the rules. At a time when most employers thought only of their pockets, this man's example stood out as a reminder that they had other responsibilities than to make money and grow rich. The lesson was neglected. Manufacturers did not hold with the ideas of Robert Owen, but preferred to continue in their old oppressive ways. But to the working class themselves Robert Owen was a hero. His name became a household word among the poor and the downtrodden. The beneficence that he practised and the theories that he preached shone like a beacon-light amid the gloom of their despair. Owen himself died in poverty; but the ideals which he had given to the world lived on.

Combination Act Repealed.—Yet such philanthropic effort, however heroic and sincere, could not carry the world far. What in reality was needed, if the position of the working man was at all to be improved, was an effort on the part of the working man himself. Nor even so could he hope for much success unless he organised. Individuals alone, working one here, one there, were powerless; but, if all alike combined, there would be no resisting the sheer dead weight of numbers. So the first and essential step was to get men to act together. But here a difficulty arose. At the end of the last century a law had been set up forbidding all "combination" among workmen; and, during the period of the great wars and after, the formation of working-class societies or (as we should say) Trades Unions had been treated as seditious. Before, therefore, any progress could be made at all, it had been necessary to secure the repeal of this ban on "combination."

The man who undertook to see it done, and who by dint of sheer vigour and persistency succeeded, was an obscure individual of the name of Francis Place. Place was a child of the people, originally a breeches maker in another man's employ; but he had worked and saved, and eventually himself became a master. This good fortune, however, did not cause him to forget the miseries of the less fortunate. He spent long hours in thought over projects of reform. He compiled a huge mass of evidence concerning the injustice done to individual workers; and above all he read. The ideas of Adam Smith took a firm hold upon his mind; but he applied them in a new and original direction. If competition and freedom from restrictions was considered good for the

¹ Owen has good claim to be regarded as the founder of the "Co-operative Store." The purpose of the system, which has since had a great vogue, is to do without the services of the middleman retailer, and so save his gains for the pockets of the poor. The plan of a Co-operative Society is to run a shop for the use of its own members and then at the end of the year to divide up the profits of the sales among them. Since Owen's day the movement has grown enormously, until now a large proportion of the retail business of England is in the hands of Co-operative Stores.

masters, it was equally, he argued, good for the men. Employers should not have everything their own way; and it was only fair that their employees also should be at liberty to drive their bargain about wages; it was obvious, however, that in driving such a bargain the individual workman could do but little good, unless he were permitted to make common cause with others. So on the ground of Free Trade principles alone, if not on any other, Place was resolved that the ban on combination must be taken off; and by such arguments as these he was able to win round some politicians to his views. His opportunity came when Canning and Huskisson took office. Free Trade was in the air. A more generous attitude of mind prevailed in Parliament; and, when in 1824 a Bill was introduced by Place's friends for the Combination Act's repeal, it was passed with scarcely a demur. It was not long, however, before members came to realise what dangerous liberty this gave the working class; and in 1825 a determined move was made to take back what had been given. But it was now too late: the triumph of Place's cause was not radically shaken and, although some hampering conditions were laid down, combination between workmen was henceforth allowed under the law.

The career of Trades Unionism had in fact begun. At first, as perhaps was natural, the men were slow to use their new-won liberty. They did not attempt to unite on an extensive scale, but were content to form small local groups in single factories or single towns, with the result that they could make little headway in the fight with their employers. The futility of such disunited action was, however, soon apparent; and about the time of the Reform Bill they struck out a bolder line. Several Unions were now launched which were intended to embrace, not the men of one locality alone, but those engaged upon some special craft in whatever part of England. There was a Builders' Union and a Cotton Spinners' Union and a host of various others; but the existence of these bodies was at best precarious; their membership was very limited, their progress painfully slow. The fact was that, under the conditions laid down by Parliament in 1825, Trades Unionism had been robbed of half its strength. Though permitted to debate about their policy or to drive a collective bargain with their masters, the men were definitely prohibited from coming out on strike or from taking any action whatsoever to enforce their claims. Small wonder, therefore, that they soon despaired of progress in this particular direction, or that, long before the fall of the Whig Ministry, their effort had begun to take a different trend. For a new idea was stirring. The very Reform Bill, which had given them results so far below their hope, had none the less pointed them the way. They must have a new Reform Bill, and a Reform Bill under which the working class would be included. In other words, the magic of the vote had caught hold upon their fancy; and they felt that, if their troubles were to find a swift solution, it was political power and political power alone which could provide the key.

Feargus O'Connor.—The great working-class crusade for political reform which we call the Chartist Movement had its origin in various sources and drew into its stream, as time went on, many different groups of men. The whole of England was in a disturbed and restive state. The new Poor Law, to begin with, had served only to aggravate the problems which it did not try to solve. It took the weekly dole from thousands of ill-paid workers and yet put nothing in its place. All they now had was the starvation wage, which the hard-hearted employer showed no inclination to augment; yet most men much preferred to starve rather than to accept the grim alternative of the workhouse. They suffered terribly; but it was not like Englishmen to suffer long in silence. An agitation was begun, and not without success, to delay the enforcement of the law. From the North country in particular, now and henceforward to be the storm-centre of industrial discontent, there went up a shout of anger. Societies were formed for protest and resistance. Torchlight meetings were convened when the day's work was over, and inflammatory speeches delivered to huge crowds.

The chief spokesman and figurehead of this northern agitation was a loud-mouthed, impetuous, voluble Irish giant of the name of Feargus O'Connor. Part of O'Connor's influence depended on the growing popularity of the "Northern Star," a newspaper of which he was the editor; but his true element was the platform. There, face to face with an excited crowd, he could give full rein to his wild imagination, rousing the fiercest passion, by his roaring rhetoric, and ready, if need be, to use his Irish fists on anyone who dared to disagree with him. O'Connor's avowed policy was revolution; class warfare his unfailing remedy for the troubles of the poor. But happily there were some among the working class themselves who disagreed with him. In Birmingham, for instance, there was a strong association of moderate-minded men, who preferred pacific methods to an appeal to naked force. The most effective opposition to O'Connor's violence came, however, from the capital itself. The London Working Men's Association was a more sane and educated body than was to be found elsewhere in England; and its leader, William Lovett, was a man of a very different type from the wild prophet of the North.

The Chartist Convention.—A tall, spare, gentlemanly figure, with a quiet determined manner, melancholy eyes, and feeble health, Lovett had more about him of the thinker than the demagogue. Under his influence the London group did a deal of solid spadework. They issued a scathing pamphlet on the "Rotten House of Commons" and, not content with this, proceeded further to draw up proposals for reform. The result was the famous document which they called the "People's Charter"; and the proposals it contained were briefly these: first, that every man in England should receive the vote; second, that voting should take place by secret ballot; third, that any person, whatever his degree,¹ should be eligible to stand for Parliament; fourth, that the

¹ By an Act passed in 1711 membership of the House of Commons had been restricted to men who were possessed of considerable property.

members should be paid a salary; fifth, that a new election should be held in every year; and sixth, that all constituencies should be made of equal size. In short, these Six Points meant nothing more or less than out-and-out democracy and the surrender of the power of Parliament into the hands of the People. In 1838, when it was first drawn up, it was the dream of a few visionary enthusiasts (though a dream which for the most part has since that day come true). It drew cold, contemptuous laughter from the superior, level-headed, comfortable classes; but even its humble authors can scarcely have been prepared for the immense enthusiasm it aroused among the mass. Within a few months all other projects had been cast aside. The Poor Law itself was half-forgotten; and every hope now centred on the "Chartist" cause. It was arranged to circulate a national petition demanding that the Charter should be put in force, and in every corner of the kingdom the workers flocked to sign it. Meanwhile in London preparations were on foot to convene a "People's Parliament." Delegates were sent from various working-class associations; early in the spring of '39 some fifty representatives met together at a hotel in Cockspur Street near Charing Cross, to discuss what policy should be pursued if the Petition were rejected. Seldom in history was there seen a crazier session. The delegates of this wonderful "Convention," as they called it, had a most exaggerated notion of their own importance; they even wrote the letters M.C. after their names in imitation of Parliamentary members. But rules of procedure were totally ignored. Problems were discussed which they could not by any possibility control. They wrangled and formed factions, like a party of raw boys, some following the lead of the patient practical Lovett, some preferring the more rough-and-ready methods of the reckless firebrand of the "Northern Star." After this manner three mortal months were spent in idle vapouring. But the cause made little progress; the number of signatures given to the Petition fell far short of first hopes; the delegates themselves were tired of talking and felt something must be *done*.

The moment could scarcely have been more favourable to a policy of violence. The bad harvest of the previous autumn was making itself felt; and the thin, drawn faces of the famished multitudes began to wear an uglier look. "Better to perish by the sword than starve" was the thought now uppermost. In the middle of May the Convention moved from the capital to Birmingham, there to mature its plans in greater security from interference. Their scheme now was that, at the moment when the Petition was presented, the Government should be cowed into surrender by a grand display of force, possibly a general strike, but, if need be, something worse. Guns were everywhere in readiness. Manifestos were issued calling for the "Tyrants' Blood;" in some places barricades were actually set up. But the Chartists had reckoned without the Government itself; and the Government, too, was ready. Sir Charles Napier had been put in command over the northern district, and had distributed his troops with admirable discretion.

Thousands of the middle class had been sworn in as special constables. The police force, though pitifully inadequate, was on the alert. At the beginning of July there was a raid on a mass meeting held in Birmingham and several arrests were made. Lovett was taken up on a charge of seditious libel. But still the grand display of force hung fire. A week later Thomas Attwood, a Birmingham banker, Chartist leader, and member for the borough, brought forward a motion in the House of Commons that the Petition should be heard. The motion was thrown out by 235 votes to 46. Volumes of windy threats had been poured out in the Convention about the measures to be taken, if such a thing were done. Yet, now that it was done, days passed and nothing happened. The truth became apparent. The Chartists had begun to lose their nerve. The more, in fact, they thought about an insurrection, the less they liked the look of the adventure; and soon they were actually discussing the advisability of "winning round" the middle class! Meanwhile, as the courage of the Chartists cooled, the Government was adroit enough to follow up its momentary advantage. Crowds were dispersed by soldiery, and not without much bloodshed. Search was made for firearms. Suspects were arrested, and imprisoned or transported. Lovett was committed for a year to jail. O'Connor suffered a like fate. In a brief while, the back of the whole movement had been broken. Indecision, divided counsels, and a total miscalculation of the force opposed to them had left the Chartists impotent and foolish at the hour of the great test. Instead of closing up their ranks, they fell more and more a prey to jealous faction; and at the end of August the Convention ceased to be. The great cause had missed its tide.

Revival of Chartism.—But, though the fires of Chartism were burning low, the embers smouldered on, to break out again and again during the Forties into bursts of fitful life. For the misery of the people did not allow them to forget; and, when in due course both Lovett and O'Connor were released from prison, the work of reorganisation was begun. The discouragements of previous years had induced a calmer spirit. There was less talk now about recourse to open violence; but a renewed attempt was made to drive the Six Points home. In 1842 a second Petition was got up, containing, or purporting to contain, over three million names. It was carried in procession to the House of Commons. A one-sided debate followed. The Petition was talked down by the eloquent Macaulay and other clever speakers; and the affair concluded, as on the first occasion, with an enormous hostile vote. This blow, however, was by no means the most deadly which befell the Chartist cause. For the rift within its ranks was growing wider; and the real struggle of these latter years was not so much a struggle against enemies without, as a contest for the leadership within. O'Connor now came out in his true colours; he was really a self-seeker first and last, and, whether or no he made financial profit out of the movement's funds, there can be no sort of question that he was mainly aim-

ing at power. His jealous nature aspired to a unique personal ascendancy and could "bear, like the Turk, no rival near the throne." He announced with astonishing effrontery that he alone had remained faithful to true Chartist principles, that he had all along opposed recourse to violence, that he was the sole saviour of a shaken cause. On Lovett he delivered a series of mean, unscrupulous attacks; and, carrying the fickle mob along with him, left the patient, persevering Londoner almost without a following. Lovett was prepared to watch and wait and educate the masses. O'Connor was compelled to hurry blindly on because upon such tactics his own popularity depended. To revive the flagging interest of his dispirited supporters, he presently evolved a brand-new scheme for settling back the people on the land. So the demand for three acres and a cabbage patch was added as a sort of postscript to the cardinal Six Points; and a Joint-Stock Company was actually floated for buying up small holdings for the poor.

Final Failure of Chartism.—But the climax in the career of both the Chartists and O'Connor was reached in the year of '48. That year was a landmark in the development of Europe. Revolution was in the air. France once again emerged as a Republic. The German populace seemed for the moment to have their rulers by the throat; and the noise of all these doings naturally found an echo on the other side the Channel too. Some of the continental revolutionaries went over; and, fired with the idea of an international alliance among workers, the Chartist leaders resolved on a last throw. Once again a Petition was prepared, signed, the "Northern Star" asserted, by a full six million names. Its supporters were enjoined to collect on 10 April at Kennington Common, then an open stretch of grass. Half a million were expected; but on the day, not a twentieth part of such a number came. The military were watching; the Duke of Wellington, now a veteran of eighty, was given the command; and with characteristic caution he kept his troops in perfect readiness, but out of sight. Nearly two hundred thousand special constables had been enrolled. Speeches were delivered to the assembled crowd; and the crowd listened without emotion under a pouring rain. O'Connor, pale and nervous, drove off to Westminster. The Great Petition followed in three cabs. This curious document (found upon inspection to contain far less than three million signatures and of these a large proportion apparently forged) was in bulk at any rate a formidable object. Unfolded, it would have stretched for several miles in length. When it reached the House of Commons and was ushered in, it was greeted with loud laughter and derisive cheers. That laugh was a measure of the Petition's real importance. O'Connor's crowning effort had proved the worst fiasco of them all; and Chartism had shot its final bolt. From a living movement it had fallen as dead as Queen Anne.

The real cause of the Chartists' failure was that they did not know their own minds. Among the banners which they carried in procession was one inscribed with the words "God save the Queen" and underneath

the comment "For nobody else will"; and that contradiction was typical of their whole attitude. They wanted to be loyal and disloyal at one and the same time; like Macbeth, they would not play false, and yet would wrongly win. Though they never really wanted revolution, they pretended that they did, aspiring to effect constitutional ideals by unconstitutional means. Instinct forbade them to push matters to extremes; but the infectious violence of O'Connor had a fatal fascination for uneducated minds to which the cool commonsense of Lovett could make no permanent appeal. Yet, though immediate failure was the outcome of a weakness which the mass of working men had still to overcome, Chartism brought qualities to light in them which were a certain pledge of their ultimate success. The moderation which refused the choice of revolution stood out in admirable contrast to the feverish excesses of continental folk; and, though advance might be sadly slow in coming, yet such patience was an earnest that, when it came, it would all the more be sure. Nor, on the whole, had the leaders of the movement been false to the great tradition which has made the English people the pioneers of freedom. Though incapable of effective organisation, they had been lacking in neither vision nor ideals. What they failed at the moment to achieve by threats, they ultimately won through the sincerity and justice of their cause. For the governing class, while defying all weapons of intimidation, was not deaf to the argument of reason. The lessons of Chartism had sunk in; and one by one the Chartist principles were almost without exception endorsed by Parliament itself. Vote by ballot came within a generation; salaries for members within two; and finally the vote has now been granted, not merely to all Englishmen, but to their wives and sisters as well. The twilight of the Chartists' agitation was merely a prelude to a dawn they never saw.

CHAPTER VI

PEEL AND THE CORN LAWS

The collapse of the great Chartist movement in 1848 was accepted with more or less indifference by the mass of the working class; and if, as such indifference seems to prove, they had ceased to be interested in political reform, the explanation is not far to seek. For the worst of their sufferings had already been relieved in a different but more effective fashion; and the odd thing was that this relief had come not from a Whig but from a Tory Ministry. At the General Election of 1841 the party which had opposed the great Reform Bill was returned to power by an electorate thoroughly disgusted with the bungling of the party which had passed it. With a solid majority of eighty-one the Tories entered office; and the man who was to carry England forward over the next great step of her political development was the old associ-

ate of Huskisson and Canning, called now to become the new **Prime Minister**, Sir Robert Peel.

Peel's Character.—Some understanding of Peel's character and history is essential to an understanding of what he now achieved. He was not by birth an aristocrat proper; but the son of a prosperous northern manufacturer. His father, however, had aspired from early days to see him Prime Minister of England; and he had been sent to school at Harrow, where he eclipsed even the brilliance of his school-fellow Lord Byron; then to Oxford, where he had established a new record by taking a "Double First."¹ But, though his superb ability coupled with a genius for hard work had soon won him a place within the Tory Cabinet, Peel's nature did not easily assimilate with the company he found there. He never wholly shook off the influence of his middle-class upbringing. It seems almost as though he was secretly ashamed of not being "quite a gentleman." His manner was awkward and reserved, and so shy that the young Queen declared it made her feel shy herself; "she would have liked Mr. Peel much better if he would only keep his legs still." His very smile was in O'Connell's words "like the silver plate on a coffin." This brusque uneasy manner and a natural reticence of temper, too, led to some lack of sympathy between Sir Robert and his more consciously thoroughbred colleagues; and no doubt, as time went on, it helped to pave the way for their eventual breach. Far more important than all this, however, the accident of Peel's commercial parentage gave him a different outlook upon life from the normal Tory politician. The ingrained bigotry of their most cherished principles had never taken full hold upon his mind. He could look squarely and fairly at the facts before him; and, if his reason told him that his policy was wrong, he at least had the honesty to abandon old convictions and the strength to shake free from the trammels of a party prejudice. This quality in Peel was in fact his greatest strength. Men might hate, but they could never despise his deep sincerity of purpose. His very oratory had in it nothing designed for mere effect; it aimed at proving "not that he was eloquent, but simply that he was right"; and in the things that mattered most when he became the Tory Premier, it is beyond a doubt he was.

Peel's Free Trade Budget.—The moment at which Peel had entered office was fraught with the gravest peril of national disaster. The opening months of 1842 marked, as we have said, perhaps the lowest depth of misery and want. The proletariat was slowly starving. Industry was at a standstill. In one north-country city two-thirds of the factories were closed. Others were little better; and while the population steadily increased, trade was dwindling like a summer stream. One remedy was obvious. The customs duties levied upon imports, though much reduced by Huskisson some twenty years before, were still excessive and still acted as a clog. The manufacturers who wanted raw materials could not afford the price with the duty added to it. The

¹ First-class honours, that is, in Classics and Mathematics.

straight-forward method of reviving trade seemed therefore to take off the customs duties; but this was less easy than it sounds. On the income from such duties the Government's revenue depended; and already the revenue was sadly in arrears. In 1841 the deficit was five millions; in 1842 it was seven and a half. Under such circumstances to cut off the most valuable source of revenue seemed a suicidal policy; and there appeared to be no solution to this crux.

There was a solution, however, which to ourselves is evident. Then, it was evident to but a very few—the Free Trade theorists who followed Adam Smith. Their answer to the problem was as follows: “Reduce the customs duties, and mark the inevitable result. Trade will once more revive. Imports will flow in. Industry will flourish and the country will become rich. *Such taxes as remain will bring in as much again as the taxes you remove, simply because, as the volume of imported goods increases, the takings at the customs also will increase in like proportion.*” This argument, however, required an act of faith. The promised benefits of its adoption would not be felt at once; and it might well be doubted whether any government had the pluck to take the plunge. Even the Whigs, despite their close connection with the merchant class, had not thought fit to take it. The Tories by habit of a long tradition were pledged to the principle of protecting England's home industries and believed in taxing imports to keep foreign rivals out. But Whig or Tory, it mattered little now, when the country seemed threatened with sure financial ruin; and all eyes looked to Peel as the only man who had the power to save it.

Now Peel had a habit, as we have said above, of looking hard facts in the face. But more than that he was a great financier; and it was not for nothing that he had served alongside Huskisson in years gone by. He prepared to make the plunge. In his budget speech of 1842 he took a firm line upon the reduction of import duties—“not more than 5 per cent on raw materials, not more than twenty on manufactured goods”; and he was as good as his word. In fact he went one better, and within the next few years took off the tax on wool, lard, hides, and some other raw materials altogether. Nothing but good resulted. Industry revived. Trade poured into England; and, as he had expected, the actual loss to revenue was barely a quarter of a million pounds. Peel, however, was not the man to stake all on expectations. He had therefore cautiously provided, in case the total takings from custom dues should drop, a supplementary source of revenue. A tax on income had hitherto been levied only under the necessities of war; but Peel fell back upon this unpopular expedient in a time of complete peace. A tax of 7½d. in the pound was taken from all incomes above £150. At first it was intended for a term of three years only; but the prosperity resulting from his other measures was by then so abundantly displayed, that he felt no qualms about continuing a burden which the richer class could so well afford to pay; and in point of fact the Income Tax has never since been dropped. Thus fortified,

his bold financial policy went on from strength to strength; and by 1845, so far from showing a deficit on the yearly budget, Peel actually found himself in the fortunate position of being able to pay off part of the great national debt.

The Anti-Corn Law League.—There is one tax, however, of which up to this point no mention has been made—the import duty upon grain. This tax, which had been imposed in 1815 to provide protective stimulus to agriculture, still stood as Huskisson had left it on the more equitable basis of the “sliding-scale.” But despite this alteration, its effect was, as before, to maintain the price of grain at an artificial level; and this, while it meant a good chance of high profits for the farmer and a certainty of high rents for the landlord, meant for the poor man bread at a cruelly exorbitant rate and never very much of it at that. The home-grown supply was quite inadequate to meet the needs of a rapidly increasing population; and, except in famine years when the price topped 73s. a quarter, not a grain of foreign wheat was allowed to enter the country. Now, though Peel had introduced some further changes in the sliding-scale, he had made as yet no effort whatever to remove the incubus itself; and his excuse for leaving it was the old familiar plea so often urged by its authors and supporters. The agricultural class, they argued, is the backbone of the nation; and to maintain it in prosperity is the plain duty of a prudent Government, not merely because a plentiful supply of home-grown food is a source of strength in peace, but even more because it is the sole guarantee of national security in time of war. But there was more behind Peel’s attitude than meets the eye. As leader of a Tory Ministry, he numbered among the ranks of his supporters an overwhelming proportion of the landlord class; and no amount of skilful argument could cloak the awkward fact that the landlord politicians were a very selfish set. No doubt they echoed the plea set forth above in all sincerity; but the fact remained that the Corn Laws did put money into their pocket and that their pocket, as perhaps with all of us, was their most tender spot. Even at this date Peel may have realised that sooner or later the Corn Laws too must go; but he was not yet prepared to alienate his party, and for a while at least he was content to leave the Corn Laws as they were.

Others, however, both in and out of Parliament were not content. Throughout the northern counties and above all, as we have said, in the town of Manchester there were many hard-headed men of business who were the most convinced disciples of the Free Trade principles of Adam Smith. The men of the “Manchester School” had gone, in fact, very far beyond their master. They would not admit the right of Government to interfere with trade at all. Leave the individual to himself, they said; let him fight out his own battles without artificial assistance on the one hand or artificial obstruction on the other. Break down all barriers, and let free and open competition do the rest; for so and so only could a maximum prosperity be won. Philanthropists in

the ordinary sense these men most certainly were not. They may have been sorry for the sufferings of the poor; but no appeal to the softer emotions was permitted by a doctrine which expressly encouraged them to exploit the poor man's labour and to hire his services at the cheapest possible wage. The cold logic of hard fact was all that weighed with them; and its plain lesson was that methods of Protection were a failure and methods of Free Trade, so far as anyone had tried them, a success.

As early as 1838 an organisation had been started to secure the Corn Law's abolition. That year the price of grain rose as high as 77s. and the reforming party had felt something must be done. So a society was formed called the Anti-Corn Law League. Its chief spokesmen were the two remarkable enthusiasts, Richard Cobden and John Bright. Both were of the middle class; but both eventually entered the House of Commons, the first fruits, as it were, of the Reform Bill. Cobden was a partner in a Manchester cotton printing factory. He had travelled much abroad, and had kept his eyes wide open for what lessons he could learn. Such experience gave him facts to go on and sheer hard thinking did the rest; for his mind was the very incarnation of cool commonsense; and if men were open at all to the arguments of reason, Cobden sooner or later was sure to win them round. But if he was the brain of the Anti-Corn Law movement, John Bright was equally its voice. Though by origin a Quaker, accustomed in his talk, as in his letters, to employ the "thee" and "thou" of the Friends' meeting-house tradition, he possessed a natural eloquence of speech which has seldom been surpassed. A fierce sincerity leapt out into his utterance. There was a terror about him when his feelings were aroused; and, as somebody remarked, he would have made an excellent pugilist, if he had not happened to be a Quaker first. The austere restraint, however, which his puritanical upbringing had imposed on him served merely to intensify the white heat of fervent passion which he kept under so perfect a control. Bright's oratory was like the fire of a volcano, controlled by an intellect of steel. Under the leadership of these two men, bosom friends from the outset of their common undertaking, the Anti-Corn Law League forged steadily ahead. Run by business men on strictly business lines, its organisation was a new portent in English political life. Funds were collected by the hundred thousand pound. Pamphlets were distributed literally by millions; mass meetings, demonstrations, and exhibitions were got up, and attended everywhere with almost unvarying success. The workers, it is true, were too pre-occupied with their own Chartist agitation and largely held aloof, imagining (quite falsely as the issue showed) that a fall in the cost of food would mean a fall in wages too. But the middle class were captured heart and soul; even the farmers were soon half-converted. Only the landlords still refused the light. In 1842 a deputation of northern manufacturers had come south to have an interview with Peel. Peel had denied them a hearing; but the Leaguers were not so easily put off. Month after month and year after year Cobden was

on his feet in Parliament pouring forth his stream of irrefutable statistics, proving his point beyond power of contradiction. In his heart of hearts Peel was probably convinced. "You must answer this," he once said to a colleague, as he crumpled up the notes that he had made; "I cannot." Yet, like Pharaoh, he hardened his heart and hit back with the bitterness of one who knows himself in error. Having taken his position, Peel was not the man to budge for anyone.

Famine or Repeal.—There were now but two alternatives on which the Anti-Corn Law League might pin their hopes; they might wait for a general election which would prove the conversion of the country, or they might wait for a famine which would prove the country's need; and the famine occurred first. At the end of summer in 1845 day after day of pouring rain destroyed the standing harvest. A terrible shortage was in certain prospect; but this was not the worst. The potato crop in Ireland, on which the inhabitants were totally dependent, was struck simultaneously with a disastrous blight. Nothing but the sending of English grain across could save the Irish people from extinction.¹ Yet the grain could ill be spared; and, unless a miracle happened, one nation at least would starve and possibly both. There remained a third alternative, to repeal the Corn Laws and let in foreign grain at a reasonable price. Englishmen were not such fools as to remain blind to that alternative, and it was now therefore as certain as the rising of the sun that the Corn Laws would be repealed; the only question was, by whom—by Peel himself, bowing to the storm, or by his jealous opponents, the Whigs?

On the morning of 4 December, 1845, the readers of "The Times" newspaper rubbed their startled eyes. There in the leading column was an article announcing that the Tory Cabinet had decided on Repeal. How "The Times" had got wind of the secret nobody could tell; but, as time went on, the tale got about of a mysterious and beautiful lady, wife of some indiscreet and too confiding Minister, who had paid a clandestine visit to Delane, the editor, and put him in possession of her momentous news. As a matter of fact, the hint had reached Delane from one who was a member of the Cabinet itself; but for all that it was not true. It was indeed a fact that Peel had been converted, and that on his initiative the question of Repeal had been secretly debated in the Cabinet. But, so far from being prepared to move the measure, the Tory Ministers were adamant. Peel's most earnest entreaties had proved useless, and on 5 December he resigned. Would the Whigs be willing to take office and perform the task the Tories had just refused?—that was now the question of the hour. Lord John Russell, the Reform Bill leader, had recently proclaimed his own conversion to repeal; and he was asked to form a Ministry. Sharp jealousies arose, however, between the Whig candidates for office; and, unable to unite the divisions of his followers, Russell was compelled to decline the invitation. There

¹ "Rotten potatoes have done it," said the Duke of Wellington, "they put Peel in his d——d fright."

was no third alternative. Cobden and Bright could never have formed a Cabinet, and the task, to which he had already nerved his resolution, fell back once more on Peel. Yet to carry through the measure, which England was now demanding with one voice, was not, even so, an easy matter. Nine-tenths of the House of Commons and all the House of Lords were still, let us remember, of the landowning class. Peel could count on the support of the more honest and disinterested Tories, and for the purpose of this one necessary measure on the alliance of the Whigs. But the number of malcontents was certain to be numerous, and their only weakness lay in the absence of a leader.

Disraeli and Rebel Tories.—This rôle was filled in an amazing fashion. The rebel Tories found a figure-head, it is true, in the shape of Lord George Bentinck, a typical member of the genuine blue-blooded aristocracy. But he was a man of no more than middling talent; and the real standard-bearer, round whom the forlorn hope of Toryism now rallied, was an upstart middle-class Jew—Benjamin Disraeli. This extraordinary being, half-statesman, half-charlatan, and one day to be the founder of a great Conservative tradition, was at this date no new figure in the House of Commons, having sat there since first he took his seat for Maidstone in 1837. He had already, previous to that date, made some stir in the world of letters by the wit and brilliance of his youthful novels; but his ambition was far from satisfied with that, and he took to politics. His maiden speech in Parliament had been laughed down; but Disraeli was not the man to be discouraged. Raising his voice to a “remarkably loud and almost terrific tone,” he had retorted back upon his mockers: “I have begun several times many things, and I have often succeeded at the last; ay, sir, and, though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me.” That was the sort of man Disraeli was; and with cock-sure deliberation he had now set out to attract public attention to himself. Theatrical in manner, Bohemian in his tastes, conceited to a ridiculous degree, but caring little what he said or did so long as he figured in the limelight, he certainly succeeded in encompassing this end. His dress and whole get-up was foppishly fantastic; “a bottle-green frockcoat and a waistcoat of white, of the Dick Swiveller pattern, the front of which exhibited a network of glittering chains; large fancy-pattern pantaloons, and a black tie above which no shirt collar was visible, completed the outward man. A countenance lividly pale, set out by a pair of intensely black eyes, and a broad but not very high forehead, overhung by clustering ringlets of coal-black hair, which, combed away from the right temple, fell in bunches of well-oiled small ringlets over his left cheek.” His oratory was on a pattern with his dress, flamboyant, impudent, arresting. He spoke easily and frequently on subjects of which he knew little or nothing; but he made men listen by the sheer brilliance of his epigram and the rich, affected bombast of his tones.

Like the great Chatham, Disraeli was a consummate actor; and, like Chatham, too, he was a born Parliamentary hand. He had an unerring

eye for political manœuvre, and seldom missed a chance. As a young man he had interested himself in the condition of the masses; then without demonstrable reason he had suddenly turned his coat and taken up the more repaying cause of the aristocracy. When Peel's Cabinet was formed in '41, Disraeli had expected a place in it; but Peel had overlooked him, and this the Jew never forgave. The crisis of 1846 brought him the chance for his revenge; and he came out as Peel's most dangerous and obstinate opponent, defender of Protection and the Corn Laws, champion of the "landed interest" and the Tory squire. When Peel in January introduced the Bill for the Repeal, this, then, was the man who gathered under his captaincy the rebellious rank and file of Peel's own following. While the Whigs abstained from action, this new Opposition proceeded to put up a sturdy, but discreditable fight. They called Peel every bad name that they could think of—from traitor downwards. They hissed and hooted like a rabble of small boys, and dragged out the debate by every means that they could muster. The case for retaining the Corn Laws was argued with persistency, and even with ability. All the old arguments were employed, but now with an added spice of rancorous bitterness. Disraeli was irresistible. He taunted Peel unmercifully for having "changed his mind," for yielding his convictions to a factious agitation, for abandoning his trust of Tory principles and accepting—worst crime of all—the support of the detested Whigs. His sarcasm was withering. Protection, he declared in humorous metaphor, had been a thriving, healthy child. "Who can forget how its nurse dandled it, fondled it!"—the nurse, of course, was Peel—"What a charming babe! Delicious little thing! So thriving! (Loud laughter from the rebel Tory benches.) Did you ever see such a beauty for its years? This was the tone, the innocent prattle; and then the nurse, in a fit of patriotic frenzy, dashes its brains out (loud laughter), and comes down to give master and mistress an account of this terrible murder." The "landed interest" (Disraeli spoke as one who knew all about the land) was, he argued, the sheet-anchor of the State. There was no other sure foundation on which the stability of Church, Crown, and Constitution had rested or could rest. The Church!—and the fervid ebullitions of this London Jew were cheered to the echo by a body of country squires. But it availed nothing; in the teeth of the fiercest opposition, delaying amendments, and floods of obloquy, Peel carried his Bill through; and with the aid of the Whig vote it passed the Commons in the May of '46. It then went up for discussion in the Lords.

O'Connell and Young Ireland.—Peel had won a great triumph; but in the eyes of his own party he had committed a great crime. He had come into power as the head of a Tory Ministry and therefore as the champion of Protectionist principles; and he had ended by trampling both under foot. Retribution followed sharp; and it came over Peel's policy in Ireland. Like other Ministers of the day, he too had had his difficulties to face across St. George's Channel. There Daniel O'Connell,

of Emancipation fame, had become the national hero of what we nowadays should call Sinn Féin. In his agitation for the repeal of the Act of Union and the restoration of a Home Rule Parliament, he had the whole of Catholic Ireland behind him to a man. But his methods, like those of Place, the Chartist, were patient and pacific rather than lawless and disorderly; and he too, like Place, had suffered from a revolt in his own ranks. A gang of eager hot-heads, calling themselves the party of "Young Ireland," had defied the wise restraints of O'Connell's leadership and embarked upon a policy of violence, outrage, and disorder. O'Connell, it is true, had done his level best to keep the peace; but the British Government had taken fright. In 1843 Peel had struck out sternly; and, with but scant justice to the Irishman's good services had clapped O'Connell into prison. Under this firm and vigorous handling the country had quieted down, and all seemed to be going well when there came the disastrous failure of the potato crop in '45. Starvation soon awakened the old violence of "Young Ireland"; and Peel felt it necessary to strike again. At the same time as he moved for the abolition of the Corn Laws, he had brought in another Bill to give the British executive in Dublin stronger "coercive" powers. The police force was thereby to be increased. All folk were to be compelled to keep their houses after a curfew bell at dusk; and the severest penalties were threatened for all crimes against the peace. Such a Bill the Whigs in Parliament felt it their duty and their interest to oppose; and Disraeli's rebel Tories were agreed to do the same. The alliance between these two formidable factions was ominous for Peel; and the vital question was whether or no a hostile vote on the Coercion Bill would overthrow him before he had time to carry his Corn Law measure through. Prudence, however, prevailed among the Whigs. They resolved to secure the passage of the Repeal Bill before they drove its author out of power; and till May accordingly they held their hand. Then without the smallest sense of gratitude they turned and ruined Peel. On the same day that the Corn Law Bill was passed in the House of Lords, the "Coercion Bill" was beaten in the House of Commons by a combination of Disraeli and the Whigs; and Peel resigned.

Thus for the crime of being a true patriot Peel paid the fullest price; but, by those who had exacted it, the crime was never afterwards forgiven. The squires could only view it in one light, as black treachery to the cause. "They tell me," said the sporting Lord George Bentinck, "that Free Trade will save me fifteen hundred pounds a year on my hunters. But I don't care for that; what I cannot bear is being sold." Nothing could erase from such minds the memory of their great betrayal. Between the Tories who had remained true to the Corn Laws and the Tories who had remained true to Peel, there could be no reconciliation now; and as a consequence of that enduring breach the Tories remained out of office for twenty years or more.¹ Peel had saved England; but

¹ The Conservatives held office for a few months in 1852 and again for a little longer in 1858; but they never commanded a true majority in the House.

in the process he had broken his party. Yet even for his party Peel had done better than perhaps he knew. By his one act of honest principle he had shown that it stood for something more than the blind self-interest of a narrow noble caste. The new Toryism or "Conservatism," as he himself preferred to call it, staked its gage upon a far wider and more honourable issue, upholding in England the cause of intelligent sobriety against the wilder forces that made for reckless change, preferring the wholesome tradition of the past to the more hazardous pursuit of imaginary dreams, and holding fast, for better or for worse, to the existing order until the case for something new were proved beyond a doubt. That the Conservative in modern politics may claim to represent an honest, and even, it may be argued, a well-reasoned point of view is due first and foremost to Sir Robert Peel. He dealt a deathblow to the outworn creed of Restoration squirearchy; and from its grave arose after a while a new body of opinion, representative no longer of one class alone, but drawing its adherents from every section of the whole community, and destined to be led (since such was the irony of fate) by the man who had destroyed him, his old arch-enemy, the Jew.

CHAPTER VII

THE MIDDLE YEARS

The period of Peel's power, bringing with it as it did a complete reversal of England's whole commercial policy, stands out as a clear landmark dividing the two eras of the century. Before the final breakdown of the old bad tradition England had been a very miserable country; and the plight of the people had grown slowly worse and worse until the terrible climax so narrowly averted in 1846. Long years afterwards men would look back with a shudder of painful memory to the days of the "Black Forties." But with the abolition of the Corn Laws following close upon the famous Budget of 1842, the whole aspect of things changed. Free Trade acted as a wholesome lubricant to the rusting wheels of industry and commerce. Prices dropped; the public became able to afford to buy; the new demand for goods stirred manufacturers to manufacture; they woke up, hired further labour and paid further wages out; and the men, receiving wages, could themselves afford to buy; so once again there arose a new demand, leading in its turn to a fresh increase in output, more employment, more wages, and so, as before, to a fresh increase in demand. It was like the familiar nursery tale of the old woman's pig which would not mount the stile. Until the impetus were somehow or other given, the water would not stir the fire; the fire would not attack the dog; the dog would not approach the pig; and the pig refused to budge. Well might the Old Dame of the Four Countries be given over to despair. Then under the magic touch of Peel's reform,

the whole chain of effort, link by link, recovered into life. The wasting paralysis of industry was ended; and the country began to prosper as never in the past. In thirty years England's export trade was multiplied fourfold. During the same period the total of imported grain increased in like proportion; and wages meanwhile, instead of dropping as the Chartists feared, were rising steadily. It was an overwhelming triumph for the Free Trade theorists. Their most sanguine predictions had proved more than justified. Every one, rich and poor alike, had benefited by open competition; but it is only fair to say that the manufacturers themselves who had pushed the Free Trade policy had benefited most. For men of business this was in a very literal sense the Golden Age.

Railways and Steamships.—For, if the years preceding the Napoleonic wars may be called the seed-time of the Industrial Revolution, the years which followed the Free Trade Budget of 1842 were certainly its harvest. There was a spirit of buoyancy and assurance in the air. Seeing the new demand for manufactured goods, and seeing too the prospect of huge profits for themselves, the men of business launched out with a new confidence and risked large fortunes in the certain hope of winning more. Millions and millions of money were sunk in new factories, new works, new mines. Machinery was brought up-to-date, and output doubled or trebled or far more. Space would fail to tell of all the humming activity in north and middle England during these vigorous years; but of one great enterprise we must not omit mention—the building up of the great railway system. The locomotive train was still even now a novelty. It was not twenty years since the “Quarterly Review” had poured scorn upon the notion of an engine “which could travel twice as fast as a stage-coach.” George Stephenson, a workman of Northumberland, had first hit on the idea; and in the early twenties a few small experimental lines had been laid down. Then in 1825 came the laying of a line between Liverpool and Manchester and the famous competition it produced. Of the four engines which competed, one travelled at a snail's pace, one broke down upon the route, and a third refused to start. But Stephenson's “Rocket” travelled thirty-two miles an hour pulling a train of wagons after it. The opening of the railway, performed by the Duke of Wellington himself, was attended by an untoward accident; for Huskisson, the great financier, slipped under an engine and was killed. The line, however, was a great success; but owing to the general paralysis of trade little more was done till 1842; then after Peel's reform the rage began. Companies were floated, and their shares bought up in eager speculation. Within four years some twenty million pounds were sunk in railways. By 1850 all the chief main lines, except the Chatham and Dover and the Midland, had been laid. Nor were the services either slow or inefficient. Passengers were carried at a penny rate per mile in accordance with the Act of 1844; and, on the old broad gauge track which was then favoured, many a record was established both for non-stop runs and speed. The enormous

advantages to trade were obvious; food, coal, and other goods were now transported to an extent which was impossible before.

Nor in this connection must we lose from sight the kindred development of steamships. A small paddle-boat, the "Comet," had been plying on the river Clyde since early in the century; but real ocean-going liners were some while in coming. It was not till 1839 that the famous ship "Great Western" made the first steam-driven voyage across the Atlantic, doing the passage in some fourteen days. But once this and similar enterprise had proved successful, the course of improvement and invention never slackened. Everywhere ingenious wits were busy evolving new devices; and there was little lack of enterprising capitalists to take them up. During the first half of the century the number of patents taken out each year had been upon the average well under three hundred; but now the number rose to two thousand and soon to more. In 1844 the first telegraph system was installed between Paddington and Slough; and the railways lost no time in making use of the invention. By 1851 lines had actually been laid under the sea connecting England with Dublin and with Calais. In short, it was a time when each fresh day saw some new undertaking started or some novelty disclosed. The very face of England was changed during these years.

Effects on Agriculture.—The change, whether for better or for worse, was a change from country into town. Whole districts, which before had been green acres, were transformed as in a twinkling to vast smithies, begrimed with black deposit and shrouded from the sunlight by a veil of sooty smoke. In rows upon rows of squat, unlovely houses, the workmen crowded like rabbits in a warren. Whole families were herded into a single room; and yet there were still not roofs enough to keep pace with the demand. For the attraction of the higher wages which were paid to factory hands was rapidly drawing the rustics to the town; and, once Hodge had left his plough and his country cot behind him, it was seldom indeed that he returned. At the beginning of the century it is said that, broadly speaking, 80 per cent of Englishmen were living in the country and 20 in the towns; at the close of the century the proportions had been practically reversed. For agriculture this "rural exodus" had of course its serious side. But the improvement in mechanical appliances enabled the farmers to get on with fewer hands. For twenty years or more after the abolition of the Corn Laws there is no doubt that farming paid; and it was not until the seventies that the real decline began. Then indeed the influx of cheaper grain from foreign countries hit English agriculture hard. Hundreds of thousands of acres were put back under grass; and in some districts large areas became an actual waste. Farms fell into disuse or disrepair. Cottages were left tenantless and crumbled. The life of the countryside was slowly strangled, till even to be a landlord was scarcely worth the while. And so we can now see that, whether consciously or not, the squires who fought Peel's measure were fighting in reality the last battle for their class. The old position and prestige of the land-owning gentry



AN EARLY TRAIN



COACHING

suffered then a fatal blow. The age-long power of semi-feudal tenure which, however much disguised, had still given to the small minority a control over the whole policy of State, was broken now for ever. What the French peasants had achieved by violence and the sword had been achieved in England by peaceful legislation. With a gesture, if you will, of brave defiance, but at least without appeal to open force, the English landed aristocracy had descended from its pedestal of privilege and merged its future fortunes in the political adventures of the new Democracy. It took fifty years or more before the change should be complete; but already in 1846 the supremacy of the House of Lords was doomed.

II

England then had solved for herself the question which since the great Peace Congress of 1815 had forced itself with such persistent iteration on every nationality worthy of the name—Despotism and Class tyranny as under the old régime, or Democracy, Liberty, and Justice for every rank or class? To that choice England's answer had been given first in the great Reform Bill of 1832, and again more recently in the enforced submission of the landed aristocracy in 1846. How, meanwhile, had Europe answered it? Slowly, hesitatingly, and not without many a backsliding, the bulk of western nations had followed England's lead. Thanks to the timely aid of Palmerston's diplomacy, Belgium, as we have seen, had acquired her independence and a liberal constitution under her chosen king. In Spain the people's cause, which there too Palmerston assisted, had proved equally triumphant. After a long bout of civil war Don Carlos had been beaten. In 1843 the child queen Isabella had been placed upon the throne; and, striking a mean between the two extremes of revolution and reaction, Spain also had acquired a constitution, more moderate indeed than that of 1812, but still serving as a salutary check upon the pretensions of the Crown. In Portugal equally the democrats had won their battle, and were henceforth to settle down, though not without uneasy interruptions, to a monarchy of a fairly liberal type. In Italy the cause of liberty had prospered less. Austria, still holding the provinces of Lombardy and Venice, dominated, like an evil genius, the whole peninsula. The ruling princes of the small northern States, Tuscany, Parma, and the rest, were almost directly under her control. Naples in the south was held by her Bourbon ally, Ferdinand the Second, a grandson of the First. The Papal States were a very hotbed of reaction; for democracy and the Roman Church sort ill together. Only over Piedmont, Genoa, and Sardinia, three provinces lumped together under a single crown, did a monarch of at all enlightened character preside. This was Charles Albert, who in 1848 undertook the adventurous and fruitless task of driving the Austrians off Italian soil. Defeated at Novara, he resigned his crown, and left

Victor Emmanuel, his son, to make what terms he could. Similar disaster overtook another insurrection which was planned in the same year. Mazzini, the revolutionary thinker, and Garibaldi, the incomparable leader of the "red-shirt" patriots, raised a forlorn hope against the Papal tyranny in Rome. They likewise failed; by 1850 the grand dream of a united Italy had melted into space; yet the spirit of nationality was burning fiercely now, and it wanted but another twenty years till the dream should have come true.

Louis Napoleon.—The year 1848 was a great year of revolutions; and elsewhere than in Italy battles had been lost and battles won in the same cause as Garibaldi's. For north of the Alps too the tocsin of liberty had once again been ringing throughout Europe, and within the shelter of their palaces kings had trembled at the sound. The French, as their custom was, had led the way. Already the democrats of Paris were tiring of their make-believe "Citizen King," and a demand for universal suffrage had been raised. Louis Philippe lost heart and fled shamefacedly to England; and the mob sacked his palace of the Tuilleries. So once again a French Republic was proclaimed. A general vote was taken to elect a President; and the glamour of a name which woke old and glorious memories set Louis Napoleon, own nephew to the other, on the presidential chair. The second Republic however was, like the first, short-lived. Without possessing a spark of his great genius, Louis Napoleon had all the unscrupulous ambition of his uncle; and three years almost to a day from his nomination to the post of President he demolished the new system by a violent *coup d'état*, arresting the leaders of the National Assembly one morning in their beds. Barricades were erected, as soon as his action became known; but resistance came too late and Napoleon's troops shot down the Parisian crowd like helpless sheep. Yet the extraordinary thing is that, when a little after he appealed to the people's vote, he was confirmed in his position by a majority of millions. For the French public, though wholehearted for democracy, had been scared by the revolutionary excesses which had followed Louis Philippe's fall; and they saw or thought they saw in Louis Napoleon a champion at once of the liberty and the stability of France. If further proof were needed of their confidence in him, it was given a twelvemonth later, when he received at their hands the title of "Emperor of the French." Yet such confidence, in fact, was woefully misplaced. For the twenty years which followed his giddy policies were the curse of the people whom he ruled; and his crowning folly in accepting war with Prussia was to bring down his country to the dust. For all that Louis Napoleon was no despot in the ordinary sense. He was following, however feeble and insane the imitation, in the footsteps of another and far greater emperor, who had embodied in his person and reflected in his policy the aspirations of a militant, ambitious France. The second Napoleon, as the first had been, was a child of the Revolution, but the Revolution which had inscribed upon its banner not "Liberty" but "Conquest."

Germany and Austria.—Meantime, elsewhere in Europe, the upheaval which had raised this rash adventurer to power had spread revolutionary rumours far and wide. What happened in Italy we have already seen. The English Chartists, though divided and discouraged, had been fired to undertake their last crusade. There was a clamour everywhere for reforms and Constitutions, and not least among the people of the German States. How much then hung upon the success or failure of these peoples' enterprise, we have come in these latter years to understand. In 1848 Germany stood indeed at the parting of the ways; and it is not too much to say that the world's whole future was moulded by her choice. Since the futile outbursts so easily suppressed in 1819 there had been but little change. The power of Metternich and the monarchs who agreed with him had scarcely been touched by the pressure of popular demands. Austria continued to lead in an ineffective manner the unwieldy Confederation of the nine-and-thirty States. Prussia, the jealous rival, had made a more modest bid for drawing her sister states towards closer union; on her initiative a Customs League or so-called *Zollverein* had been established, whereby the various members of the Confederation (Austria alone excepted) were to trade with one another free of import dues; and thus commercially at least the German people had become one whole. For all that, the national consciousness, which Napoleon had awakened, went still unsatisfied; and the discontent aroused by Metternich's repression was working underground.

Suddenly, like a thunder-clap, there came the news that France had once again put forth her strength and a Republic been declared. The effect was electrical. During the month of March of 1848 State after State in Germany arose and extorted the concession of a Constitution from its unwilling rulers. Bavaria and Würtemberg, Hanover, Saxony, and Baden, all clamoured for reform. Even the inhabitants of Prussia followed suit. But it was in Austria herself, the hub and centre of the whole despotic system, that the cry was most persistent and intense. Led by the fire-brand Kossuth, the powerful Magyars of Hungary declared themselves henceforth self-governing, though ready to remain under the Emperor's crown. In Vienna the crowd was soon howling for the blood of Metternich; and the aged Minister fled for dear life to England. Then, bowing before the storm, his master, the Emperor Ferdinand, gave up the crown; and in a fateful moment, which decided Austria's destiny for over fifty years to come, it was taken by his young nephew of eighteen, the Archduke Francis Joseph. This young man's accession marked the turning of the tide. With Russian aid the Hungarians were soon crushed; the reforms conceded in the "March Days" were disannulled; the old methods of despotic government returned; and thus, though he was now a lonely exile in a far-off country, the spirit of Metternich prevailed once more.

The effects of all this spread wide; and over Germany itself the Emperor's victory in his own Austrian capital had a decisive influence.

There an ambitious scheme of radical reform had meanwhile been set on foot. A Parliament of delegates sent from the various States had met in the Rhineland town of Frankfort, and with much windy rhetoric and visionary hope discussed the Union of all Germany under a common liberal Constitution. It was a grand but pathetic enterprise. The delegates were filled with the loftiest aspirations; but they were scarcely of the stuff of which true revolutionaries are made. These grave, bespectacled professors, arm-chair students, and political philosophers were doubtless the wisest of their race; but, as they talked and talked, they lost touch with all reality; and, while they should have acted, they talked their chance away. At length the new Constitution was drawn up; and the Imperial Crown of a reformed united Germany was offered to the ruling King of Prussia, Frederic William IV. But it was now too late; the reaction from Vienna had set in. Frederic William was afraid of Francis Joseph, knowing that Austria's jealous eye would disapprove. Nor was he himself wholeheartedly in sympathy with the reforming cause. His own Parliament in Prussia had touched him lately on a tender side by claiming authority over the forces of the Crown. So Frederic William declined the offer of the Frankfort Parliament; and with that the Frankfort Parliament was dead. All its magnificent ideals were now but so much wasted breath. Even the reforms which already had been granted were soon revoked in many of the States. The delegates of Frankfort lingered on, still talking, till, obstinately refusing to dissolve themselves, they were ejected from the Hall at the sword's point.¹ Germany's opportunity was over. While her head had been high among the clouds, the great decision had been forced upon her by the hard facts of earth. The placid temperament of her law-abiding people, too readily submissive to the powers that be, had proved then, as it has proved so often, her undoing. She had grasped at liberty, had held it in her hand, and then with a patient philosophic eye had watched it ooze away. The Union of Germany was not to come from a kindly, well-intentioned gathering of delegates of Frankfort. Rather it was to be imposed through a policy of "blood and iron" by an autocratic statesman of Berlin.

So, looking at the map of Europe in the mid-year of the century, we see in the west a girdle of States which make upon the whole for liberty and progress. England has taken her stand. France falters, but has not in her heart of hearts been false to her ideal. Belgium, Spain, and Portugal are on the upward grade. Italy gives promise that she will yet make good. But, in the centre of the Continent beyond the Rhine and by the waters of the Danube, the growth of democracy is stayed; and already we can descry, as though in germ, the first beginnings of that fatal cleavage which sixty-four years later is to range these neighbour peoples in two irreconcilable and hostile camps, and which is to force upon them at the last the great battle of decision between the Old Order and the New.

¹ The delegates had, in point of fact, moved from Frankfort to Stuttgart.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MID-VICTORIANS AND THEIR CRITICS

I

Mid-Victorian Character.—If the strength of the eighteenth-century Englishman had been mainly “to sit still,” enjoying to the full what a secure and comfortable life could offer him, and wasting no fruitless activity upon disquieting enthusiasms, his descendant, the nineteenth-century Englishman, was cast upon a very different pattern; for his strength was to be for ever “on the move.” In every sphere of life—in commerce and politics, in art and literature and experimental science—this was a time of overflowing energy, and the mid-Victorian was essentially a man of proverbial “push and go.” He never let the grass grow under his feet. He appeared to his continental neighbours then much as the modern American appears to Englishmen to-day. As riches were accounted, he was often fabulously rich; yet in the main he was not spoilt by his prosperity. His wealth was seldom wasted in extravagance or luxury; for thrift was to him a model virtue, and like a good man of business he employed his savings to the best advantage by improving his factory or extending his trade. “Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves,” was a maxim he never wearied of repeating; and, as one who as often as not had been through the mill himself, he was not afraid, even after his fortune had been won, of continuing to live a hard, industrious life. Nor did success, as is so frequently the case, render the mid-Victorian indifferent to ideals. His was a period of almost unprecedented peace; yet the memory of the great wars which had preceded it still recalled to his mind the heroisms and triumphs of his fathers, and stirred within him a thrill of conscious pride in British energy and British pluck. He was not ashamed of being intensely, and even blatantly, patriotic. He had nothing in him of the cynic temper which scoffs at all emotions; literary romance, more especially of the sentimental sort, made a strong appeal to him; and “*The Idylls of the King*,” to take but one example, were among his favourite poems. Eager always to be up and doing something for the improvement or betterment of a world which he felt to be already extraordinarily good, he flung himself heart and soul into such a variety of causes, commercial, political, imperial, and even philanthropic, that the whole aspect of English civilised society was remoulded and transformed during these years.

Nevertheless the mid-Victorian’s outlook on the world was strangely circumscribed. He saw things from an angle which to Englishmen of today seems often absurd; and so much of what he practised was at variance with what he preached that it has latterly become the fashion to write him down a hypocrite. For this we must seek an explanation in his philoso-

phy of life. The mid-Victorian had reduced, or thought he had reduced, the art of living to a set of rules. Things were good or things were bad, not because his instinct or his conscience told him so, but because it could be proved by demonstration like a "rule of three." Honesty, for instance, was a virtue, not because it is man's duty to refrain from lies, but because in the long run it is a *paying* policy. So every action was by him referred to this simple and practical test—does it on the whole contribute to the well-being of society? does it make for "the greatest happiness of the greatest number"? If so, it will be right; and, if not, it will be wrong. The result was that the mid-Victorian, holding this theory as he did, was extremely strict and careful in his personal behaviour. Just as in commerce the prevailing doctrine was that the greatest prosperity could only be attained by every individual putting forth his greatest effort in the struggle to be rich, so equally in life his maxim ran—look after yourself and let others look after themselves; for if every individual observes the rules of conduct all will go well. So the mid-Victorian was as upright as a Pharisee, at any rate in public. He was careful to do nothing that was not eminently genteel, he went regularly to church on Sunday, perhaps twice in the day, he wore an immaculate top-hat, regarded drink and the theatre as shocking vices, and prided himself equally on the sums he gave to charity and upon his prudent margin of balance at the bank. So long, in short, as he was thoroughly respectable, did not run into debt, and did not openly, at least, break any of the Ten Commandments, the mid-Victorian felt tolerably sure of winning a well-appointed mansion in the skies.

But there was another side. In his code of social conduct there was one extraordinary gap; and here perhaps was the most characteristic failing of the age. The Rules of Life, as we have set them forth above, did not apply to business, as the mid-Victorian conceived of it, and, whenever he passed in at the counting-house door, he left the Ten Commandments on the door-step. For inside the office another set of rules held good—the rules of political economy; and these demanded, as we have often said, a ruthless exercise of competition between man and man. So the same individual who distributed his Christmas charities with an unstinting hand thought it his bounden duty at the office to be as hard as stone. As an employer he believed in keeping wages at their lowest; as a trader he considered it no shame to profiteer. "Business was business," he would say; "the rules, however stern, must still be kept; every man for himself and the devil take the hindermost"; and he honestly believed that this was both inevitable and right. And if, as was sometimes bound to happen, qualms and doubts arose, there was a ready salve for the uneasy conscience in the magic words of the Free Trade formula. Do not worry, it told him, if some poor folk should go under; for it will all work out well in the end. Competition between man and man is the shortest cut to national prosperity; and the greatest good of the greatest number can be attained no other way.

If such, then, was the creed of the average middle-class Englishman

of the nineteenth century, it would, nevertheless, be an error to suppose that it went altogether unchallenged. There was no lack of latter-day Don Quixotes to tilt against the windmill of mid-Victorian prejudice and cant. Indeed, of the outstanding figures in art or literature, religion, philanthropy, or social enterprise (and their number was by no means insignificant), nearly all were in revolt to a greater or less degree against the prevailing spirit of their age; and, before we pass on to the second half of the century's development, it would be well to pause for an instant and to consider what these men either attempted or achieved. For the influence of their deeds and words, though frequently neglected at the time, sank often deeper than anyone could guess into the mind of succeeding generations.

Sweated Labour.—These were days when “sweated” labour—labour, that is, employed at an unfair and wholly insufficient wage—was not so much the exception as the rule. The manufacturers had the whip-hand over the working class; and in the period before the tide of prosperity set in, it is not surprising that they took labour where they could find it cheapest. One common practice was to contract for a consignment of waifs, strays, and pauper children from the workhouse. At six or seven years of age these unfortunate young creatures would be handed over to the owner of a mill, who employed them to gather up waste cotton off the floor or for such other menial tasks as they were able to perform. They were housed in squalid galleries or barns, fed on unwholesome, insufficient food, and paid little or nothing for their work. By an Act of Parliament in 1802 it was ordained that such child-employees should at least attend a Sunday school and receive some sort of religious education; but this provision scarcely served to veil the truth that they were practically slaves. Nor was it waifs and strays alone who were so treated. Married men found their own wages so inadequate to meet the family requirements that they were generally compelled to send their children out to work; and one cause for the rapid increase of the population was the dependence of poor parents on what the children earned. It paid to have a family. So at five years of age, or even sometimes less, the boys, and the girls too, were driven forth to labour. Some were sent down coal-mines, where their small stature rendered them of special service. They were set to shut and open trapdoors for the passage of the coal-trucks. They were harnessed half-naked with a chain between their legs to little trolleys and sent crawling on all fours along the pitch-dark galleries, dragging the hewn coal from the seam to the shaft-bottom. In this hideous underworld—a very hell on earth—they would toil for sixteen, eighteen, or even twenty hours together. Often their parents had to drag them forcibly to work. Not infrequently they died. Others (and this employment was confined to boys) were used as chimney-sweeps. Here it was essential to break them in when young; for the chimneys were narrow—a foot or sometimes as little as seven inches square. Until their knees and elbows became hardened by attrition, the boys were of small use; and even then the work was so

unpleasant that masters had often to light a fire beneath to make them mount.

The employment of women, though scarcely so appalling, was not less disastrous to the nation's health than the employment of young children. Women were much in demand not merely for light duties, but for tasks which imposed a severe strain on their physique. They, too, drew coal—and even, it is said, carried it up in baskets, mounting by ladders to the pit's mouth. Too often between their lengthy working hours and the exacting duties of their home there was almost literally no time for rest; and the health of these young mothers was frequently ruined for life. Even the factories, where the work was less severe, were sufficiently unwholesome, being dank, insanitary places without proper light or air; nor had the manufacturers the smallest wish or incentive to improve them. In fact, the attitude of employers generally was extraordinarily callous. They took refuge in the argument that such conditions were inevitable, and that the poor must work to live. The struggle for existence was no doubt severe; but it was part of the whole theory of "competitive stimulus," in which the manufacturers themselves so ardently believed. If wages were increased, the poor, it was felt, would only take to shirking; and to interfere with the hours and conditions of employment would simply encourage intractability and sloth. "Nothing is more favourable to morals," said one manufacturer, "than habits of early subordination."¹

Lord Shaftesbury's Reforms.—During the first quarter of the century, something had been attempted, but not much done, to mitigate these evils. Even the Whigs, when they came into office, were disinclined to meddle in the matter; and the first effective protest was, in fact, to come from an aristocrat and a Tory. Anthony Ashley Cooper, son of an earl and himself heir to the title of Lord Shaftesbury,² was the man. As a schoolboy at Harrow, his feelings had been wrung by the pathetic sight of a pauper funeral; and when, as a member of Parliament, the opportunity was offered him, he did not shrink from the task of exposing the miseries of the poor and denouncing the tyranny of their masters. It was an essential doctrine of the Tory creed (a doctrine dating back to Tudor days and farther, when the Crown's control was still strong and widely exercised) that a Government's duty is to supervise and regulate the nation's industries. Upon this principle the Tories had upheld protective tariffs and such-like interferences with trade; and, as a Tory, Lord Shaftesbury felt convinced that Government interference should not have stopped short there. He wished, in fact, that Parliament should step in between the master and the man, and support the weaker party by definite legislation. Here, of course, he came into direct conflict with

¹ It must not be thought that cruelty among employers began with the Industrial Revolution; there was plenty of sweated labour before 1750; but the growth of mines and factories served to concentrate, accentuate and so bring to light the evil.

² Though he did not succeed to the title until 1851 it seems more appropriate to refer to him hereafter by this, his best-known name.

the Manchester School theory; and among his most bigoted opponents, though it did them little credit, were the two Free Trade protagonists, Richard Cobden and John Bright. Shaftesbury's first effort was before their day; and in 1833 he had got a Bill through Parliament insisting on a nine-hour day for children under eleven, and a twelve-hour day for "young persons" between eleven and nineteen.

But his real battle for reform took place during the forties. Through his exertions a Royal Commission of enquiry was appointed, and in 1842 it presented its report. The revelation of horror this contained startled the sleeping consciences of Englishmen; and, backed by a strong wave of public indignation, Shaftesbury was able to get another measure through. This—the Mines and Collieries Bill, as it was called—put an end to the employment of girls and women underground. But there was still a deal to be done; and two years later Lord Shaftesbury was again upon the breach. This time his proposal was to cut the working-day for children down to eight hours, and for adults down to ten. Bright and the rest of the Free Trade brotherhood opposed it tooth and nail; and twice in the following years the Bill was quashed. Then by a curious topsy-turvydom of parties, the Whigs, who had entered office on Peel's fall, allowed it to pass through. It was a great personal triumph for Lord Shaftesbury. Almost single-handed, by untiring energy and patient zeal, he had conferred more benefits upon the helpless masses than perhaps any other person of his times; and he had done more than that. By refusing to accept the callous doctrine of the age, and by leading his bold attack upon the selfish attitude of manufacturers, he had set a new standard to his generation, and awakened a new sense of responsibility in those called to carry on the country's government. Yet it is a curious proof how strangely limited was the mid-Victorian mind that, at the very moment when his Bill was passing through the Commons, Shaftesbury himself was no longer a member of the House, because he had been unwilling to see the Corn Laws swept away. Tory and Whig, Shaftesbury and Bright, each according to his lights, was working for the welfare of the people; one holding the interference of the Government in trade to be the only remedy for present troubles, the other maintaining with no less obstinate conviction that such interference was the trouble's only cause; and the odd thing is that neither could appreciate when the other one was right. It was the mid-Victorian's most characteristic failing to be wedded to a theory and admit no truth in other points of view; but in this who shall say he was alone?

III

Dickens and Carlyle.—Before great reforms can be effected, public opinion must first of all be won. The writer can play his part as well as the politician; and in the task of arousing the conscience of the nation Lord Shaftesbury had no more valuable ally than the novelist, Charles Dickens. For Dickens too was a rebel against the spirit of the age, and

in the uses to which he put his art he had struck out a new line. The novel hitherto had dealt almost exclusively with the life of upper or middle-class society. Jane Austen had faithfully depicted the tea-parties and love-matches of simpering young ladies. Thackeray at this very time was satirizing the weaknesses and follies of his generation; but they were the weaknesses and follies of the well-to-do who frequented fashionable drawing-rooms or fashionable clubs. Over the life of the poor and destitute the novelists had agreed, as it were, to draw a decent veil, until Dickens came and of deliberate purpose snatched the veil aside. Born a Cockney, and reared beside the dockyards and waterways of Rochester, left almost penniless at ten by the removal of his father to the Debtors Prison, and so compelled from that time forward to work for his own living, first as factotum in a warehouse, then as a lawyer's clerk, and finally as a newspaper reporter, Dickens had a wide experience of the underworld of towns which served him in good stead when he came to write his books. But his experience had done more for him than that; it had roused in him a fierce anger against the treatment of the poor—an anger which even his marvellous gift of humour did not soften. He knew what suffering was; and he was resolved to tell the world. The pictures which he has given in his novels, of workhouse horrors in "Oliver Twist," of the filthy slums of London in "Bleak House," of the senseless barbarities of Dotheboys' Hall, or the mean indignities of the Debtors Prison, were drawn from the very life; and they served, as nothing else could then have served, to awaken public sympathy for the victims of such wrongs. Dickens was artist enough, when he wished to preach a sermon, to conceal the edge of criticism under the cloak of a readable tale; but there were other prophets, struggling authors like himself, who were not afraid to thrust the point straight home.

Carlyle, the Scottish philosopher-historian, delighted to deal hard blows against the cant and hypocrisy he saw around him. In his various books and essays he denounced the lip-service men paid to virtue and the miserable half-truths on which they ruled their lives. He held up to them as models the stout lion-hearted heroes, the Cromwells and the Johnsons, who in the past had done battle for the truth. He painted the French democrats who had made the Revolution as men who at the least had been faithful to a cause; and even to Frederic the Great himself (though this to us seems strange) he had paid the homage due to a fearless man of action. Though Carlyle said many hard unpalatable things, men read him none the less. The mid-Victorian even found a lurking pleasure in hearing his own weaknesses abused; and, though Carlyle died bitter and disappointed over his failure to convict a naughty world, yet his influence had been greater than he knew. It had turned men's minds, if only for an instant, towards those grander and more permanent elements in life which they were more than half in danger of forgetting. While Dickens drew them down a by-street on a visit to the slums, Carlyle had raised them on the wings of vision to the heights

above the stars—misty perhaps at times and vaporous, but not for that less sublime.

Ruskin on Economics and Art.—To neither of these writers, however, did it fall to meet with downright argument the theories of the mid-Victorian creed. It remained for a young art-critic, the versatile John Ruskin, to attack the fundamental principles on which the manufacturers had based their lives. The idea that competition was the sole stimulus to effort, and that, unless men were purely selfish, the world could not go round, appeared to Ruskin an inversion of all truth. In his book "*Unto this Last*" he preached a new ideal, contending that, in commerce no less than daily life, love, sympathy, and generosity might play their part. Ruskin, in short, was for admitting the Ten Commandments to the counting-house, nor was he even for excluding the Sermon on the Mount. His preaching, like the preaching of Carlyle, seemed during his lifetime to have fallen on deaf ears; yet the principles he propounded have slowly won their way; and the views that men hold now are more akin to his than to the views of Peel or Bright. Ruskin's chief quarrel with his age, however, was rather with their taste than with their economics. He loathed the manufacturers, not merely because they had made the country wretched, but because they had made it ugly too. Factory-chimneys, steam-engines, and power-looms outraged his sensitive soul; and he hated to see the lovely English landscape befouled by the presence of some mushroom mining town. So he denounced the Industrial Revolution and all its hideous works, decried the ruling passion for cheap, machine-made goods, and strove to inculcate a more true appreciation of the artist and his craft. It was largely from his impulse that there arose about this time a new company of painters who themselves were rebels in their art. Seeking to get back from the stale and meaningless conventions of their age to a freer and more natural tradition of the past, they called themselves Pre-Raphaelites and tried to forget all that had been taught in schools of art since Raphael's time. They endeavoured to paint nature as they saw it with their eyes, not as the critics and masters had said it should be seen; and in their revolt against the drab artificiality of modern life they turned, much as Keats had turned, to the romance and colour of mediæval days.

Rossetti and Burne Jones, and, in a less degree, both Holman Hunt and Millais, chose as their subjects the scenes and legends of knight-hood and chivalry. William Morris revived the handicrafts of weaving, printing, and glass-painting, upon the model of work done many centuries ago; and this craze for harking back into the past had its influence on others too outside the Ruskin circle. Tennyson was not free from it. The "*Idylls of the King*," the "*Lady of Shalott*," and many others of his poems reflect the tendency; nor are they the least successful portion of his work. Nevertheless it was a false ideal. It was no less artificial in its way than the conventions which the Pre-Raphaelites despised. Painting and poetry cannot feed wholly on the past; and the beautiful must be here and with us now if its appeal is to be genuine

and strong. The mid-Victorian was not to be converted by the day-dreams of a few romantic youths. He bought their pictures indeed; but he erected more factories, built still uglier houses, and then—worse horror still—began to plaster them with crude advertisements.

IV

The Oxford Movement.—The Pre-Raphaelite revolt was not alone, however, in seeking to win new life and inspiration from the past; and during these years there had been a great religious movement which equally endeavoured to escape from the unreality and dullness of mid-Victorian worship to the purer atmosphere of an earlier tradition. The need for an awakening was indubitably great. Outwardly perhaps there was much show of religious observance; men went, as we have said, to church; but the spirit of Christianity was for all that burning low. The clergy were excellent members of society, the younger sons of squires, as like as not, who inherited the family living, just as their elder brothers inherited the family Hall; they rode to hounds, were friendly to parishioners and neighbours, distributed their alms among the poor. But they accepted in the main the ideals of the environment they lived in; they thought more of what the society would think than of what the Bible said; they had no message, upheld no light to shine amid the darkness—or so it seemed at any rate to some few more ardent souls.

Three Oxford clergymen, John Keble, Edward Pusey, and John Henry Newman, undertook a crusade for the revival of religion which in nineteenth-century England appeared to them to have been lost. For a remedy they looked back, as we have said, into the past; and tracing the origin of present evils to the Reformation of King Henry VIII, they found a solution of their own dissatisfaction in a return to the doctrines of the early Church. There at the source might be recovered, so they argued, the purest essence of the Christian creed; nor was it unreasonable to seek it there; the Church of that day and the Church of Anselm and Augustine were in reality one living whole; and the breach of continuity which England had accepted in the sixteenth century had been a fatal step. These views the three enthusiasts and others who had joined them in their so-called "Oxford Movement" proceeded to spread abroad and propagate. In 1833 they began to publish them in a series of well-argued articles entitled the "Tracts for the Times." The public were seriously puzzled and disturbed. From the start it was apparent that the views of "Tractarian" theology were but narrowly divided from the theology of Rome. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, for example, though not precisely stated, was not obscurely hinted at; and the thoroughgoing Protestant at once was up in arms. Newman in self-defence maintained at first that nothing in his theology was inconsistent with the orthodox dogma of the English Church; and in one of his tracts he made an ingenious, but overstrained, attempt to prove his point, arguing that the Thirty-Nine Articles which define the

Anglican faith, were in no sense contradictions of the true Roman Catholic view, but merely denunciations of the false un-Catholic errors which had crept into its dogma during the later middle ages. Yet, while Newman was employing his great skill of intellect and pen to convince the minds of others, he himself, at the bottom of his heart, was unconvinced. He saw at last that the English and the Roman faiths could not be reconciled; and in 1845, after a long period of doubt and hesitation, he crossed over to Rome. Manning, who like him was one day to be a cardinal, presently did the same.

The public, though not sorry to be rid of them out of the English Church, was still much exercised in spirit. The action of the Pope, who in 1850 established a system of territorial sees to organize the Roman Catholic Church in England, gave rise to fresh anxieties and reawakened the old national fear of Papal tyranny. Men fancied that a widespread secession of clergy who sympathised with Newman was likely to ensue. In this, however, they were wrong. The bulk of Newman's followers were not prepared to follow him to Rome. They preferred to remain inside the English Church and there to work, as best they could, for its regeneration and reform. This "High Church" party, as it soon came to be called, shocked many sober Protestants by the ritualistic practice they revived. The Communion was celebrated more nearly on the lines of the Roman Catholic Mass. Great emphasis was laid on the consecrated character of the priesthood; and in token of this doctrine the High Church clergymen took to wearing various vestments, and donned a surplice in the pulpit instead of the plain black gown then commonly in vogue. Yet they did not for the most part go beyond the limits of the law; and the wise restraint of Keble and other leaders who remained, served soon to pacify the public apprehension. The High Church party showed a spiritual vigour and a zeal for honest work which put to shame their critics and set a model of enthusiasm to the indifferent and the slack. The influence of their example spread wide. Men woke up once more to their responsibilities. Churches which had been let go to rack and ruin were put into repair. A craze began for restoration, carried out unhappily with more energy than taste; and within a quarter of a century nearly thirty million pounds had been contributed and expended on the work. In many other practical ways a more Christian spirit began to be revealed. As men made money more freely, the more freely too they were prepared to give. Foreign missions, hospitals, and charitable institutions of many different types were endowed and supported by voluntary funds. In works, at any rate, the later generations of the Victorian era were able to justify their faith.¹

¹ The ultimate consequence of the Oxford movement has been to drive the Established Church into a still wider divergence of theological views and religious practice. About the beginning of the present century, there began to emerge a group of High Churchmen calling themselves "Anglo Catholics" whose aim is to recover closer continuity with what they hold to be the truer and more Catholic tradition of pre-Reformation times. In particular they lay great emphasis upon a more mystical interpretation of the Sacrament reverting to the name "Mass" instead of "Com-

Darwin's Theory of Evolution.—But there is another side to the picture. Perplexities of a quite different sort were soon to assail the public mind; and the man who did most to upset the self-satisfied composure of the mid-Victorian age was not a rebel, but the true-born child and product of that age itself—a Scientist. Space would fail us here to tell of half the progress and discoveries made during the coming years in every department of the scientific field—in electricity and engineering, in anæsthetics and medical experiment, in chemistry, biology, physics, and the rest. One great discovery, however, must stand out, which, for the influence it had upon the mind of man, threw all the others completely into the shade, Darwin's theory of Evolution. Darwin himself was by taste and training a naturalist; and it fell to his lot in 1831 to make a voyage in the South Seas on His Majesty's Ship *Beagle*. His investigations among the divergent types of animal life which he found on neighbouring islands led him, after many years' research and patient thought, to formulate his theory. In 1859 he produced his famous book, the "*Origin of Species*," in which he argued that animals were not by origin of different types, but developed type from type, and step by step, through a long process of adaptation and selection due to the environment in which they lived. In 1871 he was

munions"—making much use of vestments and ceremonial, and in some cases reviving forms of service forbidden by the Protestant theology and borrowed more or less directly from the liturgy of Rome. To check such practices the Bishops proved somewhat powerless; and indeed they were in something of a dilemma. Among the regulations laid down by the Prayer book many have long since become obsolete and are observed by no one. It seemed difficult therefore to enforce discipline over some points, while relaxing it in others; and the authorities of the Church preferred to adopt a temporising policy until a revision of the Prayer Book should be accomplished and a clear line could be drawn between conformity and insubordination.

In 1927 the Revised Prayer Book, drawn up by the Bishops, was complete. In many small but sometimes important details it brings the formulæ of the Church into closer touch with the modern thought. In the marriage service, for instance, the bride is no longer asked to pledge herself to "obey" her future husband. In one respect however a reform is suggested which some hold to involve a fundamental change of doctrine. "Reservation" of the sacrament is to be permitted. The new regulations require, it is true, that the reserved Elements should be used for the communion of sick persons only, and not for the adoration of worshippers. But the more ardent Protestants maintain that even in this concession to the Anglo Catholic party the old doctrine of Transubstantiation is being allowed to creep back, and the sacred Elements will come to be regarded as possessing in themselves and apart from the faith of the recipient some magical and supernatural efficacy. It was upon this ground in large measure, that when in the late autumn of 1927 the New Prayer Book, having received the approval of the representatives of laity and clergy, came up for the further and necessary approval of the House of Commons, that approval was refused. Objection was also taken to various other phrases or regulations; and these latter the Church authorities have set themselves to rectify. But the permissive use of Reservation has not been withdrawn from the Book; and it still remains to be seen whether at its next presentation in Parliament, the Protestant prejudices of the average Englishman will prevail against the almost unanimous desire of the Bishops and of the chosen representatives of laity and clergy. If Parliament again refuses leave for the adoption of the New Prayer Book, it is at least possible that the Church authorities will then demand Disestablishment and endeavor thus to free themselves from the restraints which subordination to the State imposes upon them.

to follow this up further by showing, in his treatise the "Descent of Man," that human beings were no exception to the rule, but were themselves descended from a branch of the animal kingdom. This startling announcement fell, like an apple of discord, into a world quite unprepared for it. All the accepted notions of philosophy and religion were on the instant undermined. The first chapters of Genesis, for example, seemed now to be demonstrably wrong. So the Bible was untrue. Worse still, a world which had grown of itself by "evolution" could stand in no need of a God to have created it. All theology was proclaimed by some to be a superstition and a hoax. Indeed, the argument had only to be carried but a little further to prove that all men's ideals could be explained away. They too were "evolved," like man himself, from the instincts, fears, and appetites of brute-beasts. Writers like Huxley and Herbert Spencer developed the force and bearing of such arguments as these; and the fiercest controversies, of course, ensued.

The mid-Victorian was profoundly shocked, sadly bewildered, but in part at least convinced. After all the theory chimed in well enough with much of his own theories. If animals developed through a sort of "competition" to survive, and if the history of the world were simply one long desperate struggle for existence, had not he himself assumed long since that struggle was the essence of all life? His ideals thus proved unsound, his religious faith more than a little shaken, his beliefs reduced to a single bare assurance that Matter somehow or other had bred life and that of that life, by a long unedifying process of action and reaction, he, Man, was the result—the mid-Victorian found it difficult to believe in anything at all. Many men became "materialists" outright, seeing no truth in anything but what their eyes could prove, finding no goal in life but the satisfaction of their natural appetites or at best in an obedience to the laws of their own will. Through Darwin's revelation, the mid-Victorian's theory of life was simplified indeed. Man was not an immortal soul, subject to religious rules or even moral rules. Political economy had after all been nearer to the truth. He was simply an animal governed by the workings of biologic law. So fifty years ago the disciples of Darwin and his creed decided; and, though we have now outgrown such crude and hasty deductions from the theory, its effects are with us still. Thanks to Darwin's revelation we have come to recognize the history of mankind as one continuous process, and to regard ourselves as but one link in the chain of a development which runs on through all the centuries. Thus, even while we may criticise our great-grandfathers' opinions, we are compelled to remember that from these our own have been moulded and derived; and we can trace the workings of the evolutionary law in every department of our life and thought.

CHAPTER IX

PALMERSTON AND THE CRIMEAN WAR

I

The second half of the nineteenth century was ushered in amid a general chorus of crazy jubilation. During the summer of 1851 people talked in London as though the millennium had actually arrived. A grand "International Exhibition" was being held in the grounds of Hyde Park; and the event was taken as a sign of a new spirit of brotherhood prevailing among nations and an earnest of the arrival of that happy day when the hand of every State should be no longer turned against its neighbour, and when wars should cease altogether from the world. The great wave of prosperity, which was the outcome of Free Trade and flooded markets, appeared an incredibly bright contrast to the doleful days of famine and Protection. No shadow seemed to mar the pleasing prospect thus opened to the eyes of mid-Victorian optimists; yet on the far horizon—so far indeed as to be almost out of sight—was forming a cloud, no bigger now perhaps "than a man's hand," but soon to sweep over England, lulled by her long peace, the searching hurricane of war.

Palmerston Again.—The course of party politics during these years was comparatively simple. The events of 1847—the patriotic self-sacrifice of Peel over the Corn Laws and the disastrous split which it had caused in the ranks of his own party—had greatly cleared the air. The Whigs were now firmly in possession, and not likely to lose their advantage for some time to come. From 1847 until 1852 Lord John Russell was their Premier. Then for a brief half-year the Disraeli-Bentinck Tories put in a stop-gap Ministry; but they had no adequate support within the House itself, and what support they had was yet again diminished by the general election which soon sent them out. So the Whigs returned—this time in coalition with that section of the Tories who had backed Peel against Disraeli. Lord Aberdeen¹ was the new Government's Prime Minister. Russell was Foreign Secretary, and Gladstone, a rising star, undertook the business of finance.

But the really outstanding figure of the Ministry, as indeed of all Whig Ministries of the preceding twenty years, was that forceful personality, Lord Palmerston. The country's confidence in Palmerston had by no means diminished since his period of power during the thirties; neither on the other hand had Palmerston's confidence in himself. In many ways (it had better be confessed) this breezy, cock-sure, self-assertive Englishman was what we to-day should be inclined to call "a bounder." Once, not many days after the Prince Consort's death

¹ Aberdeen himself was a Peelite, as was Gladstone too.



GEORGE CANNING

From the painting by Lawrence



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

From the painting by Pickersgill

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

in 1861, Palmerston went down to see the sorrowing Queen at Osborne in a fashionable get-up which would have made a sensation at a race-meeting; even in his official relations with Her Majesty he was impatient and abrupt to the verge of gross discourtesy; and, since Queen Victoria was not one who cared to be brow-beaten, there was small love lost between them. The occurrence which had led to the downfall of Russell's Ministry in 1852 was typical of Palmerston's behaviour. In the closing weeks of the preceding year Louis Napoleon, it will be remembered, had effected the bloody *coup de'état* by which he overthrew the new-born French Republic and himself became virtually dictator in its stead. The news had been received in England with disgust and even with alarm; and the Queen forbade the English representative in Paris to vouchsafe any token of approval. Judge therefore the dismay with which she and others learned that Palmerston had interviewed the French ambassador in London and expressed himself delighted at Napoleon's act. Lord John Russell at once decided that Palmerston must leave the Foreign Office, before more harm were done. So Palmerston went, and in his fall he brought down the Cabinet as well. But in six months' time, as we had already said, the Whigs were back in power and Palmerston was back along with them. His preference for Napoleon's dictatorship as against the unstable, make-shift policies of the Second Republic may at the moment have run counter to the opinions of most Englishmen; but in all other matters the opinion of most Englishmen were almost identical with his. In fact, his real strength lay in being uniquely representative of both British idealism and British common-sense. He was a mirror of the whole nation's attitude towards foreign politics; and that is why during the coming years he was more and more to dominate the scene.

Russia and Turkey.—The strange thing is, however, that the year 1853 found Palmerston no longer at the Foreign Office, but Secretary now for Home Affairs, engaged on drafting details for a new convict system, shutting up the graveyards of ancient city churches, and devising methods by which factory chimneys could be made to consume their own smoke. Yet at this very moment in Eastern Europe a crisis was fast approaching in which the firm hand and wide experience of the one-time Foreign Secretary would be sorely in request. During his previous term of office, more than a dozen years before, the reader will recall a difference of opinion which arose with Russia about Turkey. In the interval nothing had occurred to improve the "Sick Man's" deplorable condition. On the contrary, the Turk was still steadily upon the downward grade; and the Tsar was still as anxious as before to make his own "dispositions for the funeral." At this date, we must remember, the Turkish dominions were enormous in extent. Besides Crete, Cyprus, Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the Arabian Coast, they included the whole Balkan Peninsula as far north as the boundary of Austria-Hungary itself. The Serbs, Rumanians, Bulgarians, and Albanians were therefore still vassals of the Sultan's crown;

but it was only the backward development of these subject Christian peoples which enabled the Mussulman to maintain his hold, and sooner or later the break-up of the whole vast Empire seemed inevitable. Tsar Nicholas for his part was determined that it should be soon. So in 1853, the year of Palmerston's return to office, he had approached the British Government with the offer of a deal. Egypt and Crete he obligingly consented to make over as England's share, provided he himself was allowed a free hand in dealing with Turkey in Europe. The impudent suggestion was, of course, rejected; the British had come to realise that the holders of India must needs keep an eye on the Levant, and, as in the days of Mehemet Ali, they were determined to maintain the integrity of Turkey as the only secure bulwark against the aggrandizement of Russia and the sole guarantee of safety to their own Empire in the East. Tsar Nicholas accepted the rebuff, having no other choice; but he immediately resumed his old designs, and, if he now wished to fix a quarrel upon Turkey, he had not to look far for an excuse.

It arose in Palestine. There, as in the rest of the Levant, the Turk was still, of course, supreme; but by a long-standing agreement the "Holy Places" of Jerusalem and Bethlehem had been made over into Christian hands. Pilgrims were free to come and go at will; the monks of the various sects kept watch over the shrines; and all would have been well if the various sects had only been agreed. But they were not agreed. The Greek Church was mortally jealous of the Roman Church; and the Roman Church was jealous of the Greek. Their bone of contention was usually some shrine. The Sanctuary of the Nativity, for instance, was the subject of a particularly violent feud, and the right to place a new symbolic "Star" above its altar was hotly contested by each set of monks. The Sultan did his best to play off one against the other, and seemed likely to end the imbroglio, as usual, by granting the privilege, which each claimed, to both. Here, however, the Tsar Nicholas perceived the chance he sought. As champion of the "Orthodox Greek Church," he demanded that the Sultan should decide the foolish squabble in its favour; and, not content with this, he advanced a further claim to be regarded as the "legal guardian and protector" over all Christians whatsoever within the Turkish realm. Prince Menschikoff was sent to Constantinople to extort these two demands; but there he met his match. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the plenipotentiary of England, was a man of exceptional experience and ability. He held the Sultan, as it were, in the hollow of his hand, and when Menschikoff arrived with his two insolent proposals, it was Redcliffe who engineered an agreement on the first point and persuaded the Sultan to give point-blank refusal to the second. The Tsar was in no mood to accept the Turks' denial, and he at once ordered his army across their frontier to the north. But he made the unwarrantable error of supposing that the attitude assumed by Redcliffe was mere bluff, and that under threat of war the support England had hitherto extended to the Sultan would collapse,

Now, it was true enough that the British Cabinet as a whole had not made up its mind. Lord Aberdeen, the Premier, was pacifically inclined; and many of his colleagues shared their chief's reluctance to plunge England into a quarrel which was not directly hers, and in which her material interests were not visibly at any rate involved. There were, however, two factors without which the Tsar had reckoned. One was the influence of Louis Napoleon, now "Emperor" of the French. This man, almost by the necessity of his position as well as by both temperament and taste, was something of a "fire-eater." To justify his recent seizure of the crown he felt the need of some magnificent achievement; and, however ludicrous the aspiration, he longed to set his name beside his uncle's on the roll of military fame. He, therefore, was hotly in favour of war against the Tsar. He had deliberately encouraged the "Roman" claim against the "Greek" about the shrines in Palestine; and, as the crisis thickened, his ardour acted as a stimulus to Britain's resolve. When the British fleet was ordered to the Dardanelles, he sent the French fleet after it; and he certainly did not mean it to withdraw again without something tangible to show for it. The second factor, as may easily be guessed, was Lord Palmerston himself. As Secretary for Home Affairs, he was not, of course, in charge of the negotiations; but on which side within the Cabinet his influence was thrown could scarcely stand in doubt. Suddenly, at the height of the crisis, Palmerston resigned. Did this mean, as he himself asserted, a mere domestic split within the Cabinet over some trifling question of political reform? or did it mean (as every one believed) that the Premier's pacific policy had won the day and that peace with Russia was to be maintained at the price of breaking England's word with the Turk? It almost looked as if it did. Yet the issue was to be determined, and that before many days were out, in a very different and most decisive fashion. On 30 November of 1853 the Russians caught a Turkish squadron outside Sinope and sank it out of hand. This clinched the matter for England's wavering statesmen. The allied fleets were ordered through the Straits; Lord Palmerston resumed his place within the Cabinet; and in the early weeks of the New Year France and England declared formal war upon the Tsar.

II

England Unprepared.—As usual, the attitude of Palmerston, who beyond all question was eager for the war, reflected accurately the public sentiment. John Bright and the other advocates of peace found few supporters. It tickled the vanity of Englishmen to feel that they were embarking upon war in an unselfish cause. There was even a curious tendency to consider the Turk a "gentleman" thoroughly deserving of England's friendship and assistance; and the martial ardour of the journalists and club-rooms was confident of victory without considering the cost. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine a country more ill-prepared for

the ordeal which lay ahead. It is a commonplace to say that peace-time soldiering is a poor preparation for the problems of the field; but things in 1854 were worse than that. In these bustling and go-ahead times when every year saw marvellous progress in machinery, in science, and in almost every other branch of human knowledge, the one institution which had stood stockstill was the British War Office. There, that Tory of Tories, the aged Iron Duke, had succeeded till the day of his death in 1852 in blocking every pathway toward innovation or reform. The staff was composed of pompous, stiff old colonels, possessed of obsolete, but very obstinate convictions, little experience and no imagination, gold-laced, narrow-minded martinets of the "Up guards and at 'em" type. Red tape reigned supreme. Organisation, fit to carry on a war at the other end of Europe, there was none, and, what was more, the would-be organisers were quite unconscious of their own shortcomings. The scandals which the subsequent campaign disclosed are now the laughing-stock of history—the shipload of soldiers' boots all made to fit one foot, the ludicrous inadequacy of medical arrangements, the consignment of shirts which "could not be unpacked without a Board"; but then they were tragic realities which cost thousands upon thousands of invaluable lives and the needless prolongation of a hideous war. Even when face to face with the actual conditions at the front, the military mind refused to re-adapt itself; and not all the personal bravery of the English commanders could ever atone for their gross incompetence and wilful inability to learn.

Alma and Sebastopol.—Before the Allies could arrive upon the scene in any formidable numbers, the Turks had themselves made good their northern frontier, and by the end of June the invading Russian army had recrossed the River Danube in full flight. Meanwhile it had been decided by the Cabinet in London to carry offensive operations on to Russian soil itself; and in the middle of September a mixed force of allied soldiers—some fifty thousand strong—was disembarked on the west coast of the Crimea. This large peninsula, about twice the size of Yorkshire in extent, contained at its southwest tip the formidable fortress of Sebastopol, accessible, but almost impregnable, from sea, and admirably adapted for defence on the land side. This town was the objective of the allied expedition, which put in, as we have said, some five-and-twenty miles away to north of it. The landing was unopposed, and it was not until they reached the River Alma on their southward march that any Russian resistance was encountered. Here, however, the passage of the river-bed was very bitterly contested; and it was only by fierce fighting that Lord Raglan's army succeeded in pressing the stubborn enemy back. Unluckily the French, who had gone astray during the battle, now refused to continue the pursuit. They were without their knapsacks; their commander, St. Arnaud, was ill, and felt unequal to the task. So the great opportunity was missed; and Sebastopol, which might now have been taken by the rush of a forced march, remained to defy England's efforts for twelve interminable months. By

the time the Allies had arrived within striking distance of the town, the Russian general Menschikoff had rallied his command, and, while drawing away with his main army in a northeasterly direction, he left a sufficient garrison to hold the fortress. Todleben, a highly skilful engineer, was toiling day and night to improvise new earthworks and defences. The civil population had been conveyed away. Sebastopol was ready; and there was nothing for it but to set the British soldiers down to the regular business of a siege.

Balaclava and Inkerman.—The operations of the rest of the campaign fall into three more or less clearly defined phases. First, in the late autumn, came a daring Russian effort to throw the English off the peninsula into the sea; at Balaclava and again at Inkerman that effort was de-

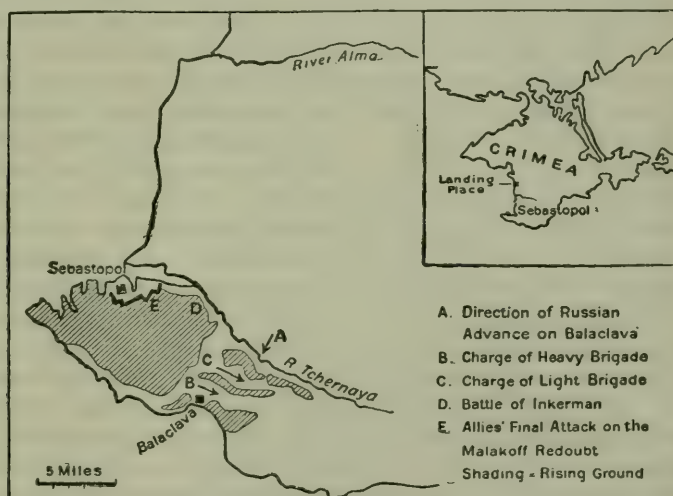


FIG. 50.—THE CRIMEAN WAR.

feated. Then followed the weary waiting of the winter months and the struggle with that most deadly enemy of all—the Russian cold. With spring, however, the tide began to turn; and the third phase of this prolonged and stubborn duel consisted of assaults—eventually successful—on the beleaguered town.

In the autumn then of 1854 the allied armies had begun their year-long task. Their numbers did not admit of a complete investment upon both sides of the harbour; so after a preliminary bombardment they settled down into siege quarters, the French to the southwest and the British to the southeast of the town proper. Despite the vigour of their batteries, however, they made but little headway; and the watchful Menschikoff, seeing his own command now swelled by reinforcements, determined on a sudden stroke. He came down out of the north, where he had been hovering since the Alma, and on 25 October he swooped round the British right and struck towards the little harbour

of Balaclava in the rear. This harbour was the base of the British commissariat; its capture would have rendered almost untenable their whole position; and the moment was therefore one of incalculable peril. The ground to be traversed by the Russian army before reaching the Balaclava plateau on the coast is divided into two narrow plains or valleys by a long low ridge which runs almost due east and west. This ridge was lightly held, as it so happened, by a few Turkish regiments and guns; they were easily dislodged, and the Russians were soon in possession of the crest. As, however, their cavalry descended into the southern plain, they were attacked from a new quarter. The "Heavy Brigade" of British cavalry, led by the Scots Greys and Inniskillings, swept down the valley and took them on the flank. Thus caught, the Russians faltered, and after a moment's desperate fighting they were sent scampering back over the ridge. By this stroke the battle was virtually decided; but it was not over yet. For at this point, occurred what was perhaps the most famous incident of the entire campaign.

The Russians had now rallied on the north side of the ridge and appeared to be about to carry off the Turkish guns which they had captured earlier in the day. Lord Raglan, seeing this and seeing also that the "Light Brigade" stood unengaged by the west end of the ridge, gave orders to forestall the enemy's withdrawal by advancing "to the front." If by this order he implied, as very probably he did, an advance to the general *British* front (that is, towards the north-east), and so the interception of the enemy's retreat, it was strategically sound; and no harm would have been done. Lord Lucan, however, who received the order, interpreted it in a quite different way, and took it to imply that the Light Brigade should charge the Russians *immediately opposed to them*, advancing, that is, along the valley, on the north side of the ridge. In that sense he proceeded to instruct Lord Cardigan, who set the Light Brigade in motion. It was the maddest of adventures from the start. The northern valley was surrounded on three sides by Russian troops; some still holding the ridge upon the south of it, others stationed in reserve upon some hills to north of it, while at its eastern end lay the Russian battery and captured Turkish guns which were now the Light Brigade's objective—in the words of Tennyson's poem, it was a "valley of death" indeed. But the Light Brigade never faltered. They lost more than half their number before they reached the valley's end and disappeared from view into a cloud of smoke. What happened then is but a confused tale. They rode in among the Russian guns and sabred many of the gunners where they stood; some even drove off approaching cavalry. Then out of the smoke came back in straggling parties of twos and threes and fours the remnant that remained of the ride of the Six Hundred—one hundred and ninety-eight survivors all told. The charge was never followed up by infantry attack; and there for the day the matter rested. The Russians did not retreat, but remained in possession of the field, an uncomfortable threat henceforth to English communi-

cations with the coast. Yet the day had been saved, however narrowly; and by British soldiers at least, if not by their commanders, imperishable glory had been won.

Menschikoff was by no means discouraged by the issue of the Balaclava fight; and, before winter closed, he determined on a further effort to break the English line of siege. One misty morning early in November two Russian armies, one coming from the town itself and one from open country, hurled themselves upon the extreme right flank of the English position. The battle of Mount Inkerman,¹ as it is called, was from first to last a soldier's fight. Mist veiled the combatants from one another; regular manœuvre was impossible; and all that the British could do was to mow the Russians down when they appeared through the dim twilight from the valley. This they did, however, with such continuous success that the enemy was never able to deploy his forces or to make his numbers felt. It was his final effort. Winter was upon them, and the two armies settled down into comparative inaction. But for the British at least there was now another and even more terrible struggle to be waged.

Winter and Reorganisation.—The second phase of the campaign is summed up in the one word "Winter." It began in the middle of November with a hurricane of pouring rain and snow; and there was more of the first than of the second during the next few weeks. The plight of English troops was terrible. Tents were blown away. Fuel for fires was unprocurable. Roads became a quagmire. Mules and horses perished; and all supplies had to be brought up by hand. The toughest of constitutions was unequal to the strain; and thousands soon fell victims to frost-bite, cholera, dysentery, scurvy, and low fever. At one time there were more men upon the sick-list than on the fighting strength. Nor were conditions at the base in any degree better. The medical organisation, feeble from the start, was utterly incapable of coping with such numbers. The voyage from Balaclava to the Bosphorous, which ought to have been done in a few days, took often as much as a fortnight or three weeks; and on that fearful passage sometimes as many as a quarter of the sick and wounded died. At Scutari, which lies opposite Constantinople on the Asiatic side, a British hospital awaited the survivors. It was a dismal place—a monster barrack-building utterly unfit even for men in health. A hideous stench pervaded it; for there were sewers under the floor. There was a shortage of bedsteads; none but the coarsest bedding; no basins, soap, or towels. The only food was "ill-cooked hunks of meat, vilely served at irregular intervals," and not too much of it at that. The staff of doctors was ludicrously inadequate; and they were almost overwhelmed.

Luckily, however, in late autumn Miss Florence Nightingale had arrived upon the scene, with an ill-defined commission from the English Government to organise the nursing. Her explosive energy and in-

¹ Mount Inkerman itself lies to the north of the River Tchernaya; but the actual battle took place between the river and the town.

domitable will-power served in the course of time to bring order out of chaos. She fought the hydra of red-tape and beat it, lashing the astonished mandarins with the fury of her tongue, and refusing to accept the official excuses for inaction or delay. Soon comforts of every sort—even dressing-gowns and tooth-brushes—had been provided. Funds too were forthcoming to continue the good work; for “*The Times*” correspondent had exposed the scandal, and the public sent money with an open hand. As for the soldiers, they worshipped Miss Nightingale almost as a saint. “Before she came,” said one of them, “there was cussin’ and swearin’; but after that it was ’oly as a church;” and indeed Miss Nightingale deserved all the praise that can be given her. She had founded, by her personal example, the noble traditions of the British Red Cross.

By spring the worst was over. Troops had been poured out in ever-increasing numbers. Victor Emmanuel, King of Piedmont and Sardinia, had thrown in his lot with England and sent a contingent; and soon there were two hundred thousand allied troops in readiness for the re-opening of the campaign. Meanwhile a railway had been laid from Balaclava to the camp; five or six hundred siege-guns were pounding Sebastopol to ashes; and the trenches were creeping daily nearer to the walls. The Russians too had suffered severely from the winter months; but they clung on still with a grim tenacity. The old defences being quite untenable, Todleben had constructed earthworks in advance of the town walls; and to carry these was the allied troops’ immediate task. Louis Napoleon himself had a grand scheme for a conclusive victory, ending with his own triumphal entry to the town. Happily however, the plan was shelved; and the assault was to be directed by more practiced hands. Pélissier, now commander-in-chief of the French forces, began in June to press attacks against the Russian earthworks; but a grand assault on the 18th miscarried and the Allies suffered a severe setback. This misfortune broke Lord Raglan down, so that he died soon after; and it was not until September that the end came into sight. The Russian defensive line hinged mainly on two bastions, known as the Malakoff and the Redan. The French were operating against the former of these works; and when they had driven their trenches to within a distance of five-and-twenty-yards, it was decided to launch a joint offensive. Noon was the hour chosen; for that was the time when the Russian garrison was usually relieved. The ruse succeeded beyond all expectations; and the French occupied the Malakoff with little loss. At the Redan, however, the British attack met with a different welcome. Their charge was beaten back by a fierce fire; the few who got inside the work were soon dislodged; the approach trenches got blocked, as the reserves came up; and such was the confusion that the order was given for the attack to cease. Yet at that very moment the Russian retirement had actually begun. The capture of the Malakoff had decided them; and during the night their troops were crossing to the north side of the harbour. Magazines were exploded, buildings

burnt, and finally at daybreak the bridge itself was blown into the air. What remained of Sebastopol was England's at last. It was the 9th of September, twelve months almost to a day since the first expedition landed on the Crimean coast.

Results of the War.—Tsar Nicholas himself had died in early spring; and his successor, Alexander II, though too proud to accept humiliation, was more disposed, perhaps, to treat for terms. The French too were ready to cry off; and in the ensuing winter a peace-treaty was accordingly arranged at Paris. Under its terms, Sebastopol was to be left dismantled; all warships were to be withdrawn henceforth from the Black Sea; and a small strip of country by the Danube mouth was to be ceded to the Turks. Thus Russia got off lightly. Her power to harm was not permanently crippled; and, as time would prove, she was to return to the attack. Nor was it merely the ambitions of a Tsar which rendered this inevitable. The plight of the Balkan Christians under the misrule of the Turk was becoming past endurance; and, twenty years exactly from the close of the Crimea, the revolt began. The Bulgarians rose in arms in 1876; Serbia and Montenegro followed them; and at the sight of this the Tsar could not withhold. Soon the Russian armies were in full march upon the Turkish capital itself. By England naturally this was not allowed to pass. Old fears were awakened; and her fleet was sent up through the Dardanelles to safeguard Turkish interests once again. This time, however, England's help did not avail to save the "Sick Man's" skin, and the Sultan had to submit to a serious amputation of his vast dominions, Rumania, Serbia, Montenegro, and to all intents and purposes Bulgaria, were given independence. Only a comparatively narrow strip of country across the southern Balkans was left in the hands of the egregious Turk. Thus far at any rate did Russia's policy prevail; and even if no actual territorial gain accrued to her, she won an immensely increased prestige and influence with the new independent States. In short, the most that England had achieved by the Crimean war was to prevent these struggling nationalities from being absorbed into the Tsar's own realm. Seeing how great a source of conflict and unrest they have been from then till now, it may perhaps be doubted which solution was the better for the world. England's policy of championing the Turk had appealed to its supporters as disinterested and chivalrous; yet, considering the tyrannous character of Turkish rule, it was difficult to square it with British traditional professions of liberty and justice; and if it led, as possibly it did, to a wrong solution of the Balkan problem, then the cost in blood and treasure—fifty million sterling and two hundred thousand lives—was a heavy price to pay for the adventure.

III

Palmerston's Supremacy.—That it should have been Lord Palmerston himself and not Lord Aberdeen who brought the Crimean

war to its successful issue was no more than right and proper. Aberdeen had gone into the struggle with a faint and doubting spirit. His conduct of the campaign had been nerveless and incompetent; and before long the revelations of gross mismanagement had raised a storm of public anger. Early in 1855 a motion of censure was brought forward in the House; and Lord Aberdeen had been defeated by a large majority amid shouts of mocking laughter. There was only one man who could take his vacant place and restore the shaken confidence of the electorate. And so Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister at last; and it was his matchless vigour and determination which repaired the deficiencies of England's military equipment and organised the final triumph of the campaign of 1855. Palmerston, in fact, had now become the "inevitable man." The nation felt it could not do without him; and for the remaining ten years of his long life he enjoyed a run of unprecedented power. Once indeed in 1858 he was temporarily dethroned,¹ and a stop-gap Ministry of Tories occupied the Government benches for a brief fourteen months. But apart from that there was scarcely the shadow of a cloud to dim the great man's glory.

"Pam," as he was affectionately called, was the universal hero. Men felt that, even if he had not saved England from disaster, he had at least preserved her from humiliation and disgrace. More than this, his bold foreign policy had raised her to a pinnacle of world preeminence, making her at once the terror of her enemies and the self-appointed champion of the wronged and the oppressed; and, so long as he lived, Palmerston continued to play this curious double rôle of imperialist knight-errant. He rapped the knuckles of the Shah of Persia who had dared in 1856 to invade Afghanistan. Next year he sent an expedition to punish the Chinese, who had the impudence to detain a merchant ship; and, by way of compensation for the misdemeanour, he extorted an indemnity and extensive trading rights. Even in Europe he was regarded with a deference which bordered upon awe. All realised that, so long as he was leading her, England would not stand idly by and see small nations bullied; and when Garibaldi and his band of fellow-patriots struck their great blow for Italian Independence, it was England's sympathetic attitude which deterred the other Powers from hostile intervention. Foreign statesmen of the reactionary type vowed under their breath that, if the Devil had a son, Lord Palmerston was he.

One famous episode in his career (though it occurred before the last period of his power) may stand as a sample of his policy. It fell on this wise. In 1850 the Greek mob at Athens had made a violent predatory attack on the house of a certain foreign resident, Don Pacifico

¹ The circumstances which led to his fall were curious. A certain Italian exile, named Orsini, had manufactured in London the bomb with which he attempted to take Louis Napoleon's life. The French demanded that measures should be taken to prevent the recurrence of such things; and Palmerston complied by introducing a Bill imposing severe penalties on alien conspirators in England. The public, however, were at this moment strongly anti-French, being suspicious of Napoleon's warlike temper; and the Bill was so much resented that Palmerston was thrown from office.

by name. Don Pacifico was by origin a Jew of Portugal; but before he moved to Greece he had become a naturalised subject of Great Britain; and this impudent outrage done upon his house was therefore an insult to Britain's prestige. As such, at any rate, Lord Palmerston considered it and demanded apology and compensation for the act. The Greek Government demurred, appealed to France, and the French took up their cause. As the quarrel thus developed into an international affair, and England's relations with a neighbouring Power became not a little strained, Palmerston himself was bitterly assailed at home for his high-handed action. A hostile motion was brought forward; and he was charged with imperilling the peace of Europe in order to replace the household furniture of a single miserable Jew. Palmerston's reply was a triumphant defence of his whole principle and policy. He spoke for five hours on end, arguing that the country's most paramount concern was to protect her nationals, and that wherever they might go throughout the world her "strong arm" should follow them and keep them safe. In the early hours of morning he concluded his appeal by a famous peroration in which he declared that England's meanest subject was no less England's child, and that there could be no prouder boast for any man alive than to claim the privilege of that security and to repeat, though with a difference, the magic formula of the ancient world "*CIVIS ROMANUS SUM.*" The speech disarmed his critics; and it gives us in a nutshell the whole secret of Palmerston's success. He was popular with his country-men, because he tickled their vanity. He flattered them into the belief—holding it in all sincerity himself—that they were the very salt of the earth, a chosen people, predestined to govern and to lead. To him the world at large was but the raw material to be disposed as the interests of his country might dictate, and to be moulded after the principles which his country had conceived. And just because Lord Palmerston was so convinced of England's mission in the world, he took it for granted that England herself stood in no need whatever of improvement. He, at any rate, made no effort to improve her; and during his term of power he initiated no great measure of progress or reform. When others formulated schemes for the extension of the franchise, he simply could not understand what they were after. He fully believed that all that could be needed had been done. He was the last of the old Whigs, content with the traditions of 1832 and blind to the deeper stirrings of a democracy now coming to the birth. Yet, when he died—a hale old octogenarian—in 1865, England was on the very eve of momentous changes and developments which, had he lived to see them, he would have ridiculed as mad. "When my place is taken," he is said once to have observed, "we shall have strange doings;" but, though the words were true enough, in his heart he did not understand.

CHAPTER X

INDIA AND THE MUTINY

I

Progress of British Occupation.—The true motive which underlay England's anti-Russian policy was, as we have said, anxiety for India. Palmerston had dreaded the collapse of Turkey, because he saw that it would open for Russia a doorway to the East; and he knew that such expansion could have no other end than to menace England's hegemony beyond Suez. Nor in this view was Palmerston's instinct much at fault. Turkey indeed stood firm, but step by step through the remainder of the century Russia was to push her frontier southward across the plains of Central Asia, until at last she seemed to be knocking at the very gate-ways of the Hindu Kush. Against the threat of such aggression England's policy has been to maintain an influence over Afghanistan and so secure for herself a bulwark in this "buffer state." The policy was begun—though not too tactfully—in the first year of the Queen's reign. An expedition was sent up through the passes and occupied the Afghan capital, Kabul. A nominee of England's was set upon the throne, and a British garrison left with him for support. But the plan was not to prosper. In 1841 the tribesmen rose and murdered the British agent in cold blood. British troops in their retreat were waylaid among the passes, and only a solitary survivor escaped to tell the tale. England took revenge by re-entering Kabul and burning its chief buildings to the ground; but this done she came away, and for a while at least left the Afghan princes to themselves. The Russian threat, however, did not cease to trouble England; and some thirty years later the agents of the Tsar were found to be tampering with the Ameer. So in 1878 the British previous tactics were repeated. A fresh Ameer was installed, and England's suzerainty once again asserted by a vigorous show of force. The same result ensued. The British "resident" was murdered, and the Afghans rose in arms. One of the British garrison was cut off in Kandahar, and it was only by the swift marching of Lord Roberts, who hurried down from Kabul in the nick of time, that a second disaster was narrowly averted. Then once again, as on the first occasion, the British withdrew, leaving a more friendly Ameer on the throne. His fidelity to England was happily maintained. By the time of his death in 1901 fears of the Russian menace had begun to fade away; and by a treaty made with the Tsar's Government six years later all cause for disquietude was finally removed.

Apart from this the maintenance of Indian frontiers has not in fact been a very serious problem. With Lord Hastings' overthrow of the Mahratta power in 1818 the last dangerous rival had been finally re-

moved, and the whole peninsula from the Himalayas to the sea lay completely at England's mercy. What independent States remained were one by one brought under British control. As a rule but little expenditure of force was needed, and sometimes none at all. The most obstinate resistance came from the Punjab Sikhs. They were born fighters and fanatics in religion; and when in 1839 their friendly ruler, Ranjit Singh, had died, their fierce hostility broke out from its restraints. Two bloody wars were fought within the next ten years before the mastery of the Punjab was won. Elsewhere England had not been idle. Seinde, a little earlier, Oude,¹ and Lower Burmah a little later were added to her realm; and thus midway through the century England could fairly claim that India was definitely hers. Some States were left under their native rulers, paying homage and tribute upon terms. Others were administered directly by British governors and agents. Apart from the occasional necessity of dealing with troublesome hill-tribes, England's task was to lie no longer in the soldiers' hands. She had now to undertake the more honourable duty of guiding India in the paths of peace.

Problems of Race and Creed.—An undertaking more arduous, more fraught with delicate and dangerous problems, and (there can be no hypocrisy in adding) more incontestably worth while, it is beyond the power of imagination to conceive. To reconcile the people to the unwelcome yoke of their foreign masters was in itself no easy matter; but over and above this there was a second problem far more perplexing and more intricate—to reconcile the Indians to each other. The past history of the country had been one long tale of feuds and jealousies and devastating wars. Unity had never been imposed except by force; and the sources of disunion were infinitely complex. To begin with, the Indians are not one, but many peoples. They speak no less than forty different languages. By origin they spring from a variety of breeds. Three main types stand out. There are first the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of India—black-skinned fellows with flat-tish negroid noses and feeble pliant character. This type predominates in the South, where the invading stocks had penetrated least. In north India generally, the Indus and Ganges basins, we find a second type—Aryans, tall and loose-limbed with a transparent brownish skin. These won their way by conquest, coming down from the Persian plains in pre-historic times. In Bengal to the north-east we come on a third type, with slit eyes and colour of a slightly yellow tinge which betrays their Mongolian blood. These represent no doubt an incursion from Tibet; but here, as indeed in every part of India, there has been an indefinite cross-breeding of the strains. In the central plains especially a pure descendant of any of the stocks is rare. Yet, wherever they are found, the Aryan element stand out in one respect; as the descendants of the conquering race, they have maintained a superiority of "*caste*."

¹ Oude had previously been under England's "protection," but not till now was it definitely annexed.

And here we arrive at a further complication; for no country in the world was ever so distracted, as is India, by social differences. At the top of the scale stand the Brahmins, pure-blooded Aryans, a sacred priest-like class with immense authority; at the bottom stand the outcasts of society, despised for their low birth, regarded as unclean, and strictly forbidden to approach within a measured distance of a Brahmin's person. Between these two extremes are a multitude of intermediate grades, varying in rank according to their occupation or the purity of their blood. The distinctions are clean-cut; and intercourse between the different "castes" is frequently forbidden by religious law. Here, however, we touch upon the greatest and most permanent source of disunity in India; for, what nationality is to the peoples of the West, religion is to the peoples of the East. The men of different religions are their traditional and natural foes. Two main creeds are to be noted and they are bitterly opposed—the Hindu and the Mohammedan.¹ Mohammedanism came in with the Moslem invasions of mediæval times; but, being as it is a great proselytising creed, it has won its way with men of every type, and the original doctrine of the true Prophet has been locally corrupted in the process. The Hindu creed, upon the other hand, goes back to the earliest days, dating from the entry into India of the conquering Aryan stock. Its ancient Sanskrit lore, the Veda hymns, are as old as Homer himself. The Brahmins are its holy men: its gods are Rama and Krishna, incarnations of Vishnu, Siva, his wife Kali, and many others; and here again there are innumerable divergencies of custom and belief. But though Hindus may differ about the titles of their gods, they are all agreed in a common hatred of the Moslem. The folk of the two religions stand apart, as it were two separate nations. They dwell, as a rule, in different quarters of the town; and any excuse for a quarrel is readily accepted as the order of the day.

Such, then, was the character of the swarming and distracted millions, which a handful of white administrators had undertaken to weld into a peaceful whole. It was a staggering proposition; and we may well ask wherein lay any prospect of success. Now it is useless to deny that force and the power of the sword lie at the bottom of England's rule in India; yet it is equally obvious that force alone would never have sufficed, and that without further aids and qualities to back it, the task of her Empire-builders could not have been achieved. In the first place, then, that task was greatly simplified by the extraordinary veneration and respect which the European's superior force of character inspires, strengthened not a little by the native's natural

¹ The Mohammedans number about seventy millions; the Hindus of every sort over two hundred millions. Thus of every twelve persons eleven belong to one or other of these two creeds. Another religion once important, now rare, is Buddhism, an offshoot of Hinduism, dating from its foundation by the prophet, Gautama Buddha in the sixth century B.C. Its most salient doctrine is the attainment to a state called the Nirvana, i.e., the annihilation of passion, failing which any number of re-incarnations may be evolved.

tendency to regard the white Sahib as belonging to an almost super-human "caste." In the second place, the Oriental mind, though versed itself in every form of slimness and deceit, is curiously appreciative of fair dealing and honesty in others; and the British sense of justice has not merely served to soften the edge of inevitable grievances, but has endowed her representatives with an immense prestige. Thus fortified, the British governor has been able to command an almost incredible obedience from multitudes which might with a little resolution have swept him and his companions wholesale into the sea. Yet besides personal authority, something more was needed—a constructive policy; and here it must be admitted England has taken her stand upon more debatable ground. As the Cæsars endeavoured in their day to "Romanize" the world, so she has made it her goal, in part, at least, to "anglicise" the Indian. She has tried to impose upon him the civilization of the West. Nor does this mean merely that he has learned to mimic in trivial matters, that he wears spectacles and often even trousers, and can repeat a few catch-words of slang. The influence goes deeper. The ideas England has put into his head are ideas imported from Europe; they run counter in many ways to the settled tradition of his life; they are alien to the whole temper of his mind; and though England has recently begun to realise the dangers and drawbacks of such a policy, and has set herself to tackle native problems from the native's point of view, it is certain that more than half her troubles in dealing with the Indian have arisen from this source.

Westernising Policy.—The policy may be said to have been started when in 1836 Lord Macaulay, as member of the Calcutta Council, decided that the training of the more educated Indians should be administered in *English*. The advantages of such a course were obvious. No useful lessons could be learnt, Macaulay argued, from the study of the Hindu literature itself; its history a series of grotesque and foolish fables "abounding with kings thirty feet high, and reigns thirty thousand years long"; its geography made up with "seas of treacle and seas of butter." British common sense dictated that the Oriental mind should be braced by the study of European history and trained upon the masterpieces of the English tongue. So, for better or for worse, it was arranged that little Indians should learn the Anglo-Saxon alphabet; and big Indians shape their political ideas on the model of England's. The plan had one great merit. It gave a real cohesion to British policy. The country was to be run on lines which England thoroughly understood and which she knew by experience to be sound. The bad and barbarous habits of the superstitious natives were to be corrected by the higher standards of a Christian morality; and the whole vast country united by a system, evolved out of practice of England's own historic past. Of this policy Lord Dalhousie, governor from 1848 to 1856, was a notable exponent. He continued the campaign against the hideous custom whereby Indian widows were burnt on their dead husbands' pyre. He hunted down the "Thugs," a hereditary band of

ruffianly assassins. He pushed forward education; installed the telegraph; built railways; reformed the administrative system and even encouraged natives to take a part in it. Within a few years the bewildered people saw the familiar institutions on which their life was built, changed or imperilled by an effort, gradual no doubt and tentative, but still a manifest and deliberate effort to "westernise" the East. It was a great ideal; and in the long run its benefits have far outweighed any harm that it has done. Yet it could not fail to cause a deal of friction; and, before the new system was well launched upon its way, there came a testing crisis which was not merely to strain England's resources to the uttermost, but to prove whether or no her intentions regarding India were sincere, and whether she could indeed maintain her high ideals of justice and fair government in the face of a savage and dastardly attack. Twenty-one years after the Education Act of Lord Macaulay, the Mutiny broke out.

II

Outbreak of Mutiny.—What drove the Sepoy soldiers to their sudden frenzy has never been properly explained. It was no carefully considered plan; nor was the conscious desire for their country's independence an original motive in the rebels' minds. Small grievances bulked larger. Lord Dalhousie's revolutionary measures had stirred in them a superstitious horror. The railway and the telegraph were regarded as the outcome of black magic. The observances of "caste" had been infringed, if not insulted. Troops had been sent over the sea, who were forbidden by their religion to cross the "black water." The Brahmins, in particular, felt that their own hold upon the people was being undermined, and resented the intrusion of the Christian missionary. Last, but not least, the Sepoys had an inkling that the cartridges served out to them, the ends of which it was necessary to bite before insertion in the gun, were smeared with the fat of their sacred animal, the cow. A wave of indignation spread over the country such as makes the Oriental fanatic "see red."

There was a prophecy current in the talk of the bazaars that one hundred years from Plassey the British rule would end; and now in 1857 the hundred years was up. On the late afternoon of Sunday, 10 May, the British residents of Meerut, in the neighbourhood of Delhi, were startled by the sudden crack of muskets. A certain Colonel Finnis had found the native soldiers releasing a number of their comrades from the guard-room; he had tried to stop them and had been shot dead. In a moment all was uproar. Buildings were set on fire, and Europeans butchered as they ran for safety through the streets. The commander of the station lost his nerve and failed to act; and by morning the mutineers had broken away to Delhi. There were no white soldiers whatever in the native capital (it was part of the agreement England made); and the Sepoy regiments were useless for defence. By

Tuesday morning there was not a foreigner in Delhi but was either dead or a captive in the rebels' hands; and the aged descendant of the Mogul emperors had been crowned King of India in the palace of his fathers. This last act was in reality an after-thought. The Mutiny was no truly national revolt. The mass of the population stood by and watched the soldiers at their work; the chief of the Mahrattas and the Rajputana princes remained loyal to England throughout; Southern

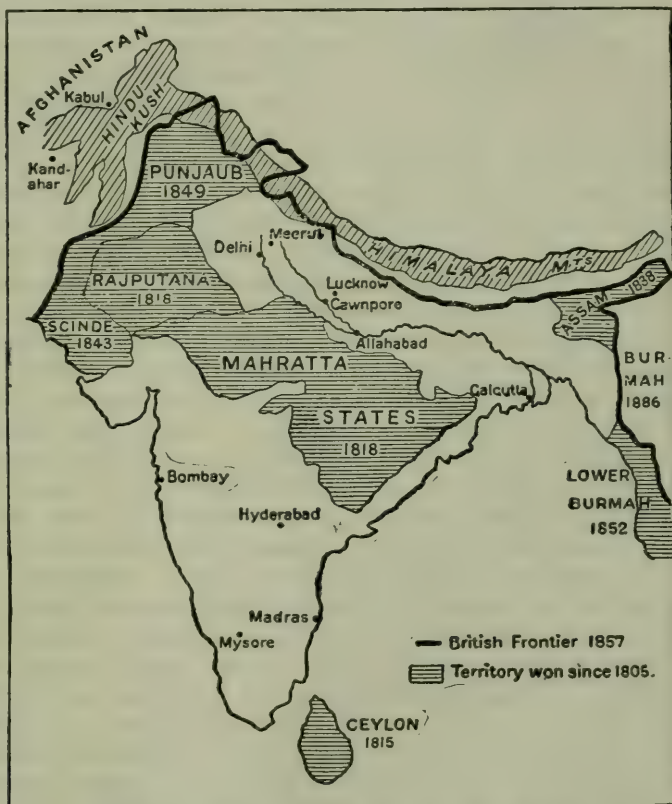


FIG. 51.—INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE MUTINY.

India was scarcely touched at all. The area of disturbance was, in fact, confined to the northern provinces between the River Indus and the Ganges valley. There the news of Delhi and Meerut spread like explosions in a magazine. Wherever native troops were, they fell on the Europeans tooth and nail. In many places the English were taken by surprise and massacred before they could escape. In two important centres, however, resistance was more effectual. These lay barely fifty miles apart in the upper valley of the Ganges; and their names were Lucknow and Cawnpore.

Cawnpore and Lucknow.—Cawnpore was an important military centre. It was held by a British garrison, less at that moment than three hundred strong; and many of the soldiers had wives and families with them. News of the Delhi rising very naturally alarmed the commander, General Wheeler; but with characteristic generosity he refused to show an open distrust of his own Sepoy regiments; and, instead of dismissing them from the strong magazine and putting it in a condition for defence, he preferred to herd the whole body of British residents and soldiers into a miserable makeshift fort at some distance from the town. A low mud wall was thrown up to form a breastwork; and the women were housed in a rickety old building in the centre of the space. The attack was not long in coming. On 4 June Nana Sahib, a local potentate, egged on the mutineers; and soon the British camp was being raked from end to end by a torrent of musket-shot and grape. The central barrack quickly became untenable; the women and children sheltered, as best they might, in holes dug in the ground; and even here many were killed by the incessant fire. The only wells were covered by the Sepoy guns, and the garrison suffered intolerably from thirst. Yet the defence went on; every time the enemy charged, they were beaten back with loss; and the mud wall was held. Three weeks passed thus, and there was no sign of relief. At length, on the twenty-first day of the siege, Nana Sahib made a show of granting terms, and offered a safe conduct as far as Allahabad. About nine hundred persons in all had taken up their quarters in the fort, of these half were now dead; but on 27 June the survivors marched out to the neighbouring River Ganges, where boats had been provided in advance. No sooner were they aboard than Nana's treacherous intentions were disclosed. Fire was opened on them from the river bank. There was no loophole for escape; and almost all the men were butchered in cold blood. The women were carried back to a filthy prison-house, there to await the pleasure of their fiendish captor. Three weeks later a relieving column under Sir Henry Havelock came marching up the Ganges. Seeing the game was up, Nana gave orders to massacre the prisoners, and then fled. When the relief force entered, there was not a single survivor to be found; but a well, choked with mangled bodies, told its tale.

At Lucknow, not far away, the end was happier, but the ordeal more prolonged. There the force at the disposal of Sir Henry Lawrence was much more considerable. Besides a thousand British combatants he was able to count on the fidelity of seven hundred Sepoys and some cavalymen of the Sikhs, who throughout the period of the Mutiny remained astonishingly loyal to their recent conquerors. The "Residency" selected for defence was a substantial building, fortified with bastions and embrasures, and rising like an island among the clustering tenements of the surrounding town. Here from the last day of June Lawrence and his company were laid under close siege. The commander himself was killed within a week; but General Inglis took his place,

and the defence was carried on. The enemy were enormously superior in mere numbers, at one time reaching, it is said, the total of sixty thousand men; but more than this they possessed the great advantage of good training. Their gunners worked the cannon with efficiency; skilled engineers drove mines under the walls; and more than once a breach was blown in the defences which were barely held against the flood of the attack. The most serious menace lay, however, in the nearness of the native houses to the Residency walls. From this cover the enemy were able to search the buildings with continuous fire, snipe the unwary, and dig their mines unseen. Constant vigilance was needed night and day; and, as death thinned the ranks of the defenders, the strain of the long watches became unbearable. But despite all the garrison clung on.

By the end of August the position had grown desperate. One week of September passed; then a second and a third; but help was now at hand. Sir Henry Havelock, having reached Cawnpore in the middle of July, had attempted, but in vain, to press on to save Lucknow. His numbers were too few and he had been compelled to fall back. By 15 September, however, reinforcements had joined him under Outram; and together the two marched to the town's relief. They were resisted stoutly by the rebel army; and inch by inch they had to fight their way through the streets of the straggling town. But the British soldiers had been goaded to a frenzy of excitement by the sights they had witnessed at Cawnpore and they pushed on like men possessed. The flag was still flying on the Residency walls when Havelock's column reached it; but, though the combined numbers of the relief force and the garrison were now sufficient to sustain the siege for months, it was impossible with the women and children and the wounded on their hands to contemplate retreat. So the defence was continued, until, well on into November, Sir Colin Campbell's Highlanders came fighting through the streets of the lower town. Then Outram, who had taken over the command from Havelock, did not wait, but pushed out to meet the sound of the advancing pipes. The two parties joined hands; and together they were now able to evacuate Lucknow carrying the non-combatants along with them. The siege had lasted but a little short of one hundred and fifty days.

Recapture of Delhi.—Sir Colin Campbell's arrival meant more than the relief of the holders of Lucknow. For his presence in India marked, in fact, the turning of the tide. This sixty-year-old veteran, whose apprenticeship in arms had been served under Moore in the Peninsula, had now been sent from England to take over the command; and he was soon to be followed by the first batch of reinforcements so eagerly and anxiously awaited. When the Mutiny broke out, there were less than fifty thousand British troops in India, their normal strength having been seriously diminished by the withdrawal of regiments for the campaign in the Crimea; and the Sepoys outnumbered what were left by fully six to one. Now, but only in the nick of time, the balance was to be gradually redressed. Troops were poured out to Calcutta;

and sooner or later it was evident that England would regain the upper hand. In the meanwhile, however, and without the aid of Colin Campbell, a great blow had been struck at the heart of the rebel cause. Delhi, the native capital, had been retaken; and this was the work of Sir John Lawrence, brother of the defender of Lucknow and civil governor of the Punjab. Within his own province Lawrence had succeeded in holding the Mutiny in check; but not content with this he *was* determined that an attempt should be made for the recovery of Delhi. He could not go himself and leave his province; but it was on his advice that a British force was sent to undertake the task; and it was his vigour in supporting it with guns and reinforcements that crowned the undertaking with ultimate success. It was an impudent adventure—three thousand Englishmen attacking a strong fortress held by a well-trained army ten or twenty times their number. All they succeeded in doing for the moment was to occupy a ridge that lies above the city and to hold it through the summer against fierce and continuous attacks. Meanwhile, however, they were gradually reinforced. Lawrence had been busy in the Punjab raising a local corps of loyal Sikhs; and these, when they were ready, were sent after the rest. By September there were upwards of nine thousand troops upon the Ridge; and the man had arrived who was to be the heart and soul of the subsequent assault upon the town itself—John Nicholson. At dawn of 14 September the attack was launched after a fierce bombardment. Four separate parties undertook to force an entrance at various gates or breaches in the walls. Three gained a footing; but at the famous Lahore Gate the fourth was bloodily repulsed; and Nicholson himself was killed in renewing the attempt. Still the worst was over; by desperate fighting through the narrow streets the British increased their hold. The Mogul “Emperor” fled; and on the 20th of September the royal city was once more in English hands.

The capture of Delhi, as Lawrence had foreseen, had an immense influence upon the native mind; and Sir Colin Campbell’s task in crushing the rebellion was greatly simplified. By the spring of the next year help from home was more than adequate, and Sir Colin struck with vigour. He took back once again the city of Lucknow which he had himself relieved and afterwards evacuated during the previous autumn. Then by a series of “drives” the British hunted down the rebels, sent detached forces to deal with outlying districts, and by the end of 1858 had definitely succeeded in stamping the Mutiny out. It was during this last period that there came what was perhaps the supreme test of the whole long crisis. Officers fresh from England were clamouring for reprisals and revenge. But it was not in such a spirit that India had been held or could be held for long. Severe punishments no doubt there were. Rebels caught red-handed in some brutal act were shot from the cannon’s mouth; and executions of a more normal kind were numerous enough. But men like the Lawrence brothers and John Nicholson had never stood for a policy of “fright-

fulness." Gentlemen to the core, they knew how to be firm and they knew how to be fair. They had learnt to know the Indian; and if they inspired a real devotion and affection in some at least of the natives under them, it was because they in their turn had shown affection too. When all was over, it was their spirit which prevailed. Lord Canning, the Governor who had seen the trouble through, had kept a cool head and generous heart amid endless provocations. "I will not govern in anger," he had said; and though sarcastic critics nicknamed him "Clemency Canning" for his lenience, he remained true to his word. In the proclamation which he issued in the name of Queen Victoria at the end of 1858, it was promised that in future the rights of native princes should be scrupulously observed, that freedom of religion should be allowed to all, and that no Indian, whatever his creed or nationality, or colour, should be debarred from suitable employment in the service of the Crown. It is by such treatment of her subject peoples that England has deserved her destiny.

III

Reorganisation of Government.—The Proclamation of 1858 was a landmark in the history of England's occupation; for it altered the whole basis upon which her administrative system was built. Since the famous India Bill, passed by the younger Pitt in 1784, the control of India had been shared between the old East India Company and the British Parliament itself. The Company had retained in its own hands the detailed management of affairs upon the spot; but the larger lines of Indian policy and the appointment of the more important administrative officials had been controlled from home, mainly by a Board of six Privy Councillors sitting with a member of the Cabinet for President. In 1858, however, the Company's share in the administration was abolished once for all.

Methods of Administration.—The British Government shouldered the whole burden; and a Secretary of State for India became responsible for Britain's Imperial trust. Since then the work of organisation has increased beyond belief; and, though the main structure of the system stands unchanged, its inner machinery has been developed and perfected in a hundred different ways. The Executive Department, which carries on the government and administers the law, comprises a large staff of civil servants. At the head is the Viceroy, appointed by the Crown for a fixed term of years, and assisted by an Executive Council of eight members who form, as it were, the Indian Cabinet. Under him are Governors, appointed to control the various Provinces; and under these again the administrators of "Districts," called "Collectors" or "Deputy Commissioners," who collect taxes, dispense justice, register the land, and supervise the well-being of the folk. Besides these, there is a whole host of minor public servants, inspectors, tax-gatherers, secretaries, and clerks who are employed for the thousand and one duties

which crop up. Such is the machinery of actual government. The making of the laws, upon the other hand, is carried on through different channels. The Parliament at home is in theory the source and fountain-head of all authority; but in practice, under the Government of India Act, 1919, legislation is now delegated to a new Indian legislature consisting of two Chambers, the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly, whose members are partly elected and partly nominated. The Provinces too have their legislative councils, dealing with local problems of business or finance; and in every "district" there are subordinate committees with which the "collector" can co-operate and consult. Thus, while Parliament itself does in fact rule India from above through its Viceroy, governors, and civil servants, yet Parliament's control has been to this extent decentralised, that it leaves much of the machinery to work itself, accepts readily the assistance and advice of those who know the problems at first hand, and has been ready, as time passes, to allow the natives a very liberal measure of self-government.

Bureaucracy, or government by experts and officials, is now in fact beginning to be tempered by a gradual introduction of the representative principle; and thus England has been true, and more than true, to the promises given in 1858. Little by little the natives have been admitted not merely to official employment of a routine sort, but to posts of high dignity and influence. Since 1907 especially, when Lord Minto as Viceroy and Lord Morley as Secretary of State worked together to give the educated Indian a greater share in his country's management, the sincerity of England's purpose has been abundantly established. For some years now two native representatives have sat on the Council of the Indian Secretary at home. Natives have been admitted to the Viceroy's Council for administration as well as for the making of the law. On the provincial councils the Indian members exceed in number the British. There are many native judges; and for better or for worse large numbers have been admitted to other Civil Service posts.¹

The privilege of self-government is, in short, being extended with an ever-quickenning pace; and lately the daring legislation of Mr. Montagu has opened up still wider possibilities. An Indian, Lord Sinha, was for a time Parliamentary Under-Secretary for India, and then a Provincial Governor. Natives are to be drafted in still larger numbers into the various councils and administrative departments; and, while the more important problems are still to be decided by the Viceroy and Executive Council, the native element is now at length entrusted with real responsibility in minor spheres. This ingenious distribution of administrative functions between the Indian and

¹ It should not be forgotten that many native States have been left to the local prince or Rajah; British officials are indeed told off to assist and advise these native governors; and in one way or another British control has been extensive. Yet thanks to the Englishman's inherent gift for an illogical compromise, the system has worked smoothly; and the native prince disposes, while England is content merely to propose.

the British is a bold experiment; for in theory at least a country can scarcely serve two masters. But, though the "Dyarchy," as the dual system has been called, has yet to prove itself effective, its tendency is plain. Democracy, nothing more and nothing less, is to be the ultimate solution of the country's problems. The principle of election is to be developed there, as in England, and the Indian taught through practice to exercise his vote. In a word, the day is drawing into sight when India may become mistress of her own destinies once more. There are long distances to travel, many pitfalls and dangers lie ahead; but rightly or wrongly England has set her compass for the goal and she cannot now draw back. It is not for nothing that, as a symbol of England's purpose, she has restored to India a historic privilege, and made Delhi what it was in the days before, the country's Capital.

The undertaking to which England set her hand in civilising India has been, as we said, abundantly worth the while. To England it has brought remunerative trade and an opening for all sorts of business enterprise. Beyond this she has sought no selfish benefits. No tribute is paid by India to her pockets. The revenues there raised are in part, indeed, employed to finance the British garrison—considerably increased since the dangerous Mutiny days and now proportionate to native regiments as nearly one to two. Otherwise the taxes are entirely spent on the development and welfare of the country; and the improvements already effected are beyond belief. Agriculture, for instance, has been well-nigh revolutionised. In the old days crops were utterly dependent upon weather; and a single drought would wipe out the population of whole provinces by famine. But since the middle of last century British engineers have been busy. Irrigation works have been conducted on a gigantic scale. Canals bring water when the rains are insufficient; and thanks to the railway system grain can now be transported to such districts as otherwise would starve. Yet famine even so is constantly occurring, claiming its victims by thousands at a time; and the problems of progressive agricultural development keep the wits of officials perpetually at work. Nor have other sources of production been by any means neglected. Industries of the European type are barely in their infancy as yet, but they are growing fast. Mines have been sunk for coal. Jute and cotton mills are entering into competition with England's north-country factories. Even steel and iron works are making their appearance; and thus, although the population of the towns is still but a tiny fraction of the whole community, the artisan class is steadily upon the increase. Wages are rising; the standard of living year by year improves; wealth is being won. For the Industrial Revolution has India in its grip.

Sedition-Mongers.—But to this development there is a more serious side; for herein is being born the greatest, perhaps, of all the problems England must meet. We said above that education had been the source of half her troubles, and it is in the towns especially that those troubles have been bred. The agricultural peasants—nine-tenths or more of the

entire three hundred millions—are averse to education. Three out of every four villages are still without a school; and not one in ten of the adult population can either read or write. But the town dwellers are different. There schools and universities have been established; and the Indian, when he learns, can learn apace. Unhappily, it is too often the man of shallow character who shows the greatest aptitude for learning. The Bengalee Babu, for instance, has a marvellous memory; but he is sadly deficient in moral stamina, and generally lacks sound judgment. And thus there has arisen the most serious danger which confronts England in India at this day. Such a man, puffed up with the pride of his new learning, and ambitious for promotion to administrative posts, is doomed inevitably to disappointment. He has not the character to bear real responsibility; and he finds himself passed over and left scribing at his desk. So not unnaturally the failure of his hopes leads on to discontent; discontent in turn has led to disaffection; and disaffection to revolutionary talk. Seditious clubs of such disgruntled persons have gathered in the towns. The education England has given them has put into their heads the political notions and catchwords of the West—nationality, democracy, and so forth.

Representative government is hardly as yet possible in a country where nine-tenths of the folk can neither read nor write; but it figures largely in the textbooks of the schools, and the sound of it is attractive to the native student's ear. So among the more hot-headed the cry has been raised for Independence. They would have India for the Indian and for the Indian only. They would break away from the shackles which now bind them, and sweep the hated task-master from every nook and corner of the land. Nor will anything short of full and complete freedom content their fevered fancy. The extensions of self-government which have recently been planned, are in part at least devised to satisfy this craving. But, like the Sinn Fein Irishman, the Indian agitator will not hear of compromise; and he has set himself deliberately to frustrate or to discredit, if he can, the successful working of new concessions. Yet there can be no other road to India's happiness than the road which England has taken. Some day, perhaps, she may become in truth self-governing; but the day is not now. Until the people have been trained for that development, until they have learnt enough at any rate to exercise a vote with some intelligence, and until, above all, a class of stronger character and clearer vision has emerged among the ranks of educated natives, England must continue to carry on the task, which she has carried on till now. England has brought India out of chaos and distress to prosperity and order; she has kept Hindu and Mussulman from flying at each other's throats and has caused them to live peaceably as neighbours; last and not least, she has undertaken to train the more intelligent in the difficult art of politics and government. But, if to-morrow England were to abdicate her trust and to leave the country to its own devices, then every man's hand would be turned against his neighbour. Moslem would fall upon

Hindu, and Hindu retaliate on Moslem. The lessons taught by nearly seventy years of peace and unity and order would be forgotten in a night-time. Village would renew its open feud with village. Caste would trample upon caste; and no less surely would there be a swift return to the old turmoil and anarchy and bloodshed than day will follow when the night is over and the sun rise from the sea.

CHAPTER XI

PROGRESS AND REACTION ABROAD

After the agitations of the Crimea and the Mutiny England enjoyed a well-earned period of inaction and repose. The last five years of Palmerston's administration were, as we have seen, dull to the verge of torpor. The Ministries which followed were chiefly interested in legislative problems. Trade flourished; parties squabbled; laws were passed; but the sixties on the whole were happy, prosperous, uneventful times, when the rich became steadily richer, when even the poor were moderately contented, and when every one alike was mainly occupied in minding his own business. But in the external world it was a different picture. There the battle-ground of causes old and new were bitterly contested; and the seeds of future quarrels, more momentous yet, were sown in the decision of past feuds. Four great wars occurred during this period. Two were fought and won in the name of humanity and freedom—the Civil War in the United States and the war of Italian Independence. Two were fought and likewise won for the German domination of the Continent—the war between Prussia and Austria, and the war between Prussia and France. It is not too much to say that the whole course of the world's destiny was altered in these years; and, before we can resume the thread of England's national development, we must understand, if only in brief outline, what was taking place abroad.

I

American Civil War.—Since their liberation from the British Crown in 1783 the United States had forged steadily ahead, and by now they were almost to be reckoned among the first-class Powers. Their population had increased to more than thirty millions. Their frontiers had crept westwards beyond the Mississippi and across the central plains; twenty-one new States had been added to the original thirteen. There was, however, one untoward side to this expansion. Along the northern frontier inevitable rivalry had sprung up between American and Canadian pioneers; and, when during the Forties the former had pushed across the Rockies and advanced a territorial claim which would practically have forbidden British access to the Pacific,

there was a dangerous clash of ambitions. Happily, after the settlement of 1815, Castlereagh had set a friendly precedent by arranging a mutual disarmament of both Canadian and American frontier-posts; and now Peel's conciliatory tactics were successful in composing the quarrel upon an equitable basis (1846). Meanwhile, the boundless resources of the country were beginning to be tapped; and the foundations of an immense commercial prosperity had been securely laid. But over all this scene of apparent security and progress there hung a shadow—heritage of a bad past, and cause in the future of a hideous civil war—the continuance of slavery. In the south especially, where the old plantation States had first arisen, the imported negro had always been in great request. The landowners who thrived upon the export of raw cotton, were particularly dependent on cheap labour; black slaves cost them nothing but their keep; they could ill afford to dispense with the advantage, and to the gross inhumanity of such a system they hardly gave a thought. In the Northern States, however, where slaves were few and where the old Puritan element was strong, a different view prevailed. Agitation had been set on foot by William Lloyd Garrison in 1831; and the climax of the controversy came when Abraham Lincoln, the northern party's candidate, was elected in 1860 to be President of the States.

Lincoln was one of the world's great men. A gaunt, ungainly figure, with a peculiar rasping voice, he was the embodiment of a firm, sagacious, and highly idealistic temper. Fearing that such a man, armed with the power of President, would make short work of their valuable slave system, the Southern States, numbering eleven of the thirty-four, resolved to quit the Union and form a separate Confederation of their own. This, however, Lincoln would not tolerate; and, though his naturally pacific soul rebelled against the cruel necessity of Civil War, the intractable behaviour of the Southerners afforded him no choice. In the summer of 1861 the Northern army marched down into Virginia, attacked the so-called rebels, and was badly beaten; and for upwards of four years from that encounter a bitter and destructive war ran on. The North held all the cards. Its population was many times more numerous. Its armies were superior in equipment. The munitioning resources of the agricultural South were meagre; and a strict maritime blockade imposed upon its harbours cut off all help from Europe. Yet the Southerners fought with a dogged pertinacity worthy of a more honourable cause. The enemy pushed a wedge along the Mississippi valley, and thereby cut the inland States beyond the river from touch with their comrades of the coastal States; but at this point alone during the first two years did the Northerners make headway. Their attempts to capture Richmond, the Virginian capital, and now the new centre of the confederate South, proved worse than unavailing. Once indeed their *generalissimo*, McClellan, came within striking distance of the town; but, losing nerve, he beat a quick retreat; and the "rebel" army under

General Lee was able actually to turn the tables and to make more than one adventurous incursion upon northern soil itself. But Lee played this game once too often. In the summer of 1863 he was caught near the town of Gettysburg and sent back home with the loss of half his men.

This victory of the North marked the turning of the tide. Well backed by Lincoln's grim determination, Grant, the successor of the irresolute McClellan, undertook a more organised campaign. He crossed south into Virginia; and, when Lee's men dug themselves in to make up for their weak numbers, pushed past them on towards Richmond. Near the town fresh earthworks checked him; and for ten weary months a regular siege-warfare of the modern type set in. Though underfed, inadequately armed, and without hope of victory, Lee and his Southerners clung on, disputing every inch; but the game was up and Lee knew it. On April 9th of 1865 the gallant soldier handed over his sword. The North made honourable use of their success; and for the moment they took no unseemly measures of revenge.¹ Slavery Lincoln had long since abolished for the rebel States at least; and, when the war was over, the Northern States gave proof of their sincerity by a voluntary acceptance of the same decree. Thus at the cost of a million white men's lives the negro won his liberty. It was still to cost one more. On the morrow of the victory, Abraham Lincoln was shot dead as he sat in the theatre at Washington—a victim to the fanatic hatred of a beaten foe.

Effects on England.—For England the Civil War was a terrible disaster. The cotton, exported from the Southern States, fed, as a rule, the mills of Lancashire. The sudden cessation of supply caused a general closing down of manufacture, and thousands upon thousands, deprived of their employment, were brought to the verge of famine. Partly because this damage to England's commerce was due to the Northerners' blockade, partly because the Northerners themselves had never shown much sympathy towards England, the bulk of upper class opinion in England was on the "rebel" side. Two unpleasant incidents bade fair to entangle England yet further. A blockading vessel of the Northern fleet stopped the British steamer *Trent* on the high seas and took off two Southern envoys who were on their way to Europe. This was a flagrant violation of England's rights as a neutral. Palmerston blustered; angry threats were made; and the two envoys were eventually released. But not much later England put herself as badly in the wrong. Complaints were lodged by Lincoln's Government that a ship called the *Alabama* was being equipped at Birkenhead for Southern use. The British Cabinet dallied; and, when at last the word was sent to stop her, it arrived too late. The *Alabama* had set sail some hours be-

¹ After Lincoln's death, however, the politicians of the North showed less restraint. They bullied the Southern States in an unseemly manner, exalting the negro at the expense of the whites. Time soon brought revenge. Secret societies sprang up among the Southerners (notably the League known as the "Ku Klux Klan") which turned the tables on the negroes and succeeded in depriving them of the political vote.

fore, as though for a trial cruise. She never reappeared in British ports, and across in western waters she worked a deal of havoc among the shipping of the North. England's negligence, if such it were, was not forgotten; and the *Alabama's* escapade was to cost her pretty dear. A claim was put in, when the Civil war was over, demanding compensation for the damage done. Negotiations were protracted; and feelings ran high on either side of the water. Eventually, however, the case was handed over to the arbitration of a neutral court. The judgment went against England, and she was compelled to pay a sum of three million pounds. It was a signal proof of British magnanimity that she submitted to so harsh a settlement. Nevertheless a sense of antagonism lingered. The defeated South was disappointed that the sympathy of the English governing class had produced no practical assistance. The North resented that sympathy, even though Lincoln's emancipation of the southern slaves had won round his English critics. It is true that emigration was slowly laying the foundation of a better understanding; for in the course of the nineteenth century the flow of British immigrants into the United States was greater than at any time since the seventeenth century, and bonds of kinship and intermarriage were beginning to make themselves felt. Unhappily however one class of immigrants—the Irish—were bitterly hostile to the home country, and they did much to keep alive the seeds of rancour. Nor must it be forgotten that other European races were helping to people the United States. The vast nation which year by year was growing apace in bulk and in prosperity was by no means purely Anglo-Saxon; and Englishmen, too often forgetful of this fact have been apt at times to count too confidently upon a bond of kinship which is more sentimental than actual; while the American government for its part has at times been over eager to remember the differences, too little eager to remember the community of interests and ideals which exist between these two great English-speaking peoples.

II

Italian Wars of Liberation.—Meanwhile in Europe the fires of nationality, for just ten years damped down, had burst again into a quickened life; and another people had broken itself free from the shackles of despotic monarchy. The peninsula of Italy, as we have seen above, was still made up, as late as 1859, of some half-dozen States; but with one notable exception all were in greater or less degree subservient to Austria. The exception was Piedmont, governed by the King of Sardinia, Victor Emmanuel II; and he it was who once again—and this time successfully—was to raise the standard of a Free, United Italy. Happily for him and for the cause he had at heart, his chief Minister, Cavour, was a statesman of extraordinary genius. For long, enlightened views and for mastery in the art of diplomatic strategy Cavour had few equals. It was on his advice that Sardinia took a hand in the Crimean

War, thus gaining a new prestige in the eyes of Europe and earning the gratitude both of England and of France; and to France, when the war was over, Cavour turned for aid. The bellicose Napoleon was by no means disinclined for an attack on Austria. Cavour played skilfully on his desires; and, when in 1859 King Victor declared war on the old enemy, the French Emperor's troops were soon marched across the Alps to his assistance. Together the French and the Sardinian forces won two great victories. Beaten at Magenta and again at Solferino, the Austrians were driven out of Lombardy. But they clung still to Venice; and, when Napoleon made a sudden halt and arranged terms, that province was left in their hands. With such a compromise Napoleon was well satisfied. In reward for his services he had secured Savoy and Nice; while as for the project of a united Italy, he had no desire to assist in raising up so uncomfortable a neighbour for himself. Cavour, on the other hand, was far from satisfied. Half of his great scheme had been accomplished, it is true. Lombardy had been won back; and some lesser northern States, such as Tuscany and Parma, had voluntarily merged themselves in Victor's growing kingdom. Northern Italy was thus far free; but there remained the centre which the Pope controlled, and the South which, together with adjoining Sicily, was ruled by the Bourbon despot, Francis, King of Naples. It was against this monarch that the next great blow was aimed; but it was not to be delivered by Cavour.

Garibaldi, the leader of the 1849 rebellion and hero of the famous fight for Rome, was here sole author of the wild adventure. He was no statesman, not even a great general, but a romantic, high-souled patriot, incomparable as leader of irregulars, dashing, utterly fearless, and incorrigibly rash. Once in his early days while cruising off the coast he had sighted a beautiful lady through a telescope, fallen in love with the vision, landed and taken her for his wife. That was the sort of impetuous fellow that he was; and now in the year after the defeat of the Austrians, in rash anticipation of Cavour's more cautious plans, he undertook upon his own initiative to recover Sicily in Victor Emmanuel's name. With a thousand fellow-patriots he seized two steamboats at the port of Genoa, and in them set out to the conquest of the island. King Francis' garrison failed to prevent the landing, and was quickly driven back upon its stronghold at Palermo. The natives rose at the call of Garibaldi; and with the help of their undisciplined contingents he proceeded to the attack. *Ruse de guerre* was Garibaldi's element; with a part of his command he enticed a large number of the garrison to quit their fortress and pursue into the hills; and meantime, before they could return from their fool's errand, he had fought his way into the town. Thus Palermo was captured. Western Sicily was won; and, as numerous volunteers poured across to join "the Thousand," Garibaldi was soon able to rid the entire island of the last of Francis' troops. When he learnt of the success of this astounding enterprise, Cavour's doubts and hesitations vanished. He did his utmost to stir

up revolution among the South Italian subjects of King Francis; and he so far succeeded that, when Garibaldi landed on the southern coast, the royal family departed in ignominious flight.

The moment had now come for Victor Emmanuel himself to act, and to claim for his own crown the liberated provinces which the unauthorized "red shirts" had recovered in his name. Garibaldi's impatience to rouse Central Italy was in danger of drawing down the anger of the greater Powers. If the thing was to be done, the King himself must do it; so without more ado an army was sent down to seize the Papal States of Umbria and the Marches. Victor Emmanuel then moved south in person, met Garibaldi, and took the movement under his own control. Rome itself, the Papal stronghold, he wisely left untouched for the time being; but, apart from this and Venice, the whole peninsula from Taranto to the Alps was now united under his single crown. Nor had he long to wait for the completion of his kingdom. In 1866 alliance with the Prussian arms enabled him to help once more in humbling Austria, and won for him the coveted reward of Venice. Five years later the defeat of France by Prussia opened to him equally the gates of Rome. It had been Napoleon's policy to back the Papal interest; but with Napoleon's fall the last obstacle to Victor's ambition vanished. The Pope had no choice but to submit; and thus passed away for ever after a thousand years and more of unenviable history the Holy Father's claim to Temporal Power. He gave up the keys of the city, disbanded his garrison of troops, and retired henceforth to the seclusion of the Vatican. King Victor entered in triumph; and by a memorable decree Rome became once more the country's capital. Only one blot remained to mar the completeness of Italian unity. Trieste, the great port at the head of the Adriatic, and a part of the Tyrol in the mountains above Venice were left in Austrian hands. In both the inhabitants were largely Italian both by speech and blood; and their fellow-countrymen of the liberated provinces could not rest satisfied, while these went "unredeemed." The recovery of "Italia Irredenta" was not least among the motives that induced them in 1915 to sever the tie of hollow friendship which then bound them to their old enemy the Austrian, and to range themselves in the Great War upon the side of the Allies.

III

Prussian Autocracy.—Austria's loss of power in Northern Italy was but the prelude to a swift decline. True, she had rallied wonderfully from the black days of 1848; and, the young Emperor Francis Joseph having crushed the revolution, her prestige in Central Europe seemed even greater than before. But such appearance of recovery was deceptive. She was no longer capable of uniting under her the unwieldy confederation of the German States; and, for better or for worse, the future lay with the only power which could. Once at the

invitation of the Frankfort Congress Prussia had had her chance and let it drop. She was not to let it drop a second time.

In refusing the Congress's offer of an Imperial crown over a reformed and liberal Germany, King Frederick William had set his face against the path towards freedom; and he had chosen its alternative—autocracy. Not many days elapsed after the great refusal before he withdrew the Constitution he had recently conceded, and established in its place a different system. The people of Prussia were indeed allowed a Parliament; and every adult Prussian was to have his vote. But the electors were divided into three unequal sections *according to an assessment of their individual wealth*; each of these three sections was to have an equal say in the choice of the members for the Parliament, and thus a few rich men, who would compose the upper section, were to count for just as much as ten thousand artisans who would be lumped together in the lowest. So Frederick William could rely on the sure prospect of support from the wealthy and the noble and had little to fear from the democratic mob; his autocracy, in short, was to rise on the foundation of a veiled, but effective, system of upper-class supremacy or Junkerdom. The Constitution so devised and first decreed in 1849 held good until the day when the late Kaiser gave up his throne.

But for the Prussian monarch there still remained a struggle. His victory was not definitely won. Though mainly representative of the more wealthy classes, his Parliament was as yet no willing tool. In 1861, on the death of Frederick William, his brother William I assumed the crown; and within a few weeks of his accession conflict with his Parliament had reached a head. This was a testing issue; and it was clear that from this struggle one or the other, Parliament or Crown, must emerge the sovereign power. William was even doubtful whether he should not abdicate; otherwise he foresaw that he must either triumph or, like Charles I of England, lose his head. "And I," said his new Chancellor echoing his thought, "shall fall as your Lord Strafford. It would be no bad figure to have cut." It was the voice of Bismarck, then but a rising man; yet the boldness of his attitude put courage in the King. He set aside the idea of abdication, and determined with Bismarck's assistance to prevail. The quarrel with his Parliament concerned a scheme put forward by the War Minister Von Roon for the reorganisation of the Prussian army. The existing system of military service seemed to the King inadequate; and in order to provide an efficient standing army it was deemed necessary to keep all conscripts with the colours for a full period of three years. To this the public were bitterly opposed; and Parliament had voiced their disapproval. But Bismarck was determined, with or without its sanction, to carry the law through. By the Prussian Constitution a Minister was responsible to the King and not to Parliament; he did not sit as a member of the House; and even its hostile vote could not dislodge him. So Bismarck and Von Roon refused to accept the rejection of the Army Bill. There were heated scenes at which strong words were used on either side; but

the Ministers stuck to their guns and defied Parliament to do its worst. Once, when Von Roon was speaking, the Chairman of the Chamber lost all patience and ordered him to stop. Von Roon continued; and the Chairman called for his hat to put it on—the customary signal for the adjournment of the House. Unluckily the hat they brought was not his own, but many sizes too large; and slipping down over the Chairman's ears it enveloped his whole head. The House adjourned amid peals of good-humoured laughter; but the accident was symbolic of its own political extinction. The Prussian Parliament, though it continued to hold sessions, had ceased, in fact, to rule. The taxes were raised without its approval or authority. Political discussion in the country and the newspapers was ruthlessly suppressed; and the Prussian people, with their habitual sheepish character, grumbled, protested—but obeyed. Bismarck had won his battle. He had got his reorganised and strengthened army; and he now prepared to use it. For he realized the secret that war and war alone would bring round the Prussian people to his way of thinking. He knew that, once the cry were raised of "the Fatherland in danger," they would rally loyally to the service of their King.

Rise of Bismarck.—The famous Chancellor, whose aim and work it was to unite the German States under the leadership of Prussia, had every quality demanded for the task. He was masterful, aggressive, and unmoved by opposition. His blunt, determined manner verged often upon rudeness. At the sittings of the German Diet, in which he was a delegate, he made bold to smoke his pipe. This hitherto had been the privilege of the Austrian representative alone; and all looked askance at the Prussian upstart's impudence. But it showed them (what they were afterwards to learn in greater matters) that Bismarck was a man who was bound to have his way. And in getting it he did not stand on scruple. Political morality was not of a lofty character in the nineteenth century; but, while Bismarck made no pretence of pursuing any interest except Prussia's, he was cynically indifferent to the methods that he used. If his ends could not be compassed by diplomacy, he never shrank from the appeal to naked force. "Prussia's ambition," he openly declared, "cannot be carried out by speeches and ceremonies and songs; it can be achieved only by blood and iron"; and in this militarist policy lay the twofold secret of his subsequent success. By war he was to win for Prussia both territory without and unity within. At each triumph of the battle-field he was not merely to enlarge his grip on Central Europe, but was thereby to gain first an increasing confidence and then at length unanimous support from his own Prussian folk; and when the King, his master, had become the German Emperor, there were few left to dispute his authority to rule.

Defeat of Austria.—Bismarck had not long to wait before a chance arose of using his new army. Between the Prussian and the Danish border lay Schleswig and Holstein, of which the King of Denmark was Duke. Neither was a very loyal adherent of the Danish Crown, from which in the wild days of 1848 they had tried to break away. Though

brought back into subjection, they still chafed under the yoke. Holstein, the southern of the two, was largely German, both by sympathy and by blood; and, though Schleswig was more definitely Danish, there was an old tradition that the two should not be parted. When, therefore, in 1863 the ruling King of Denmark died without a male heir, the German element in the two duchies renewed their previous claims to independence and appealed to their German friends to back it up. Bismarck, despite the opposition of his Parliament, was ready; and Austria, not to be outdone, prepared to help. Their combined armies had soon entered Schleswig-Holstein and beaten the feeble Danish army to its knees. Though an armistice was called and the other Powers stepped in, the eventual terms of settlement took the two provinces from Denmark, and left Austria and Prussia to dispose of them at will. Now was the moment for the ever-watchful Bismarck. To annex the debated territory for Prussia was in itself a tempting project (for, as it turned out, it paved the way for her maritime expansion and the eventual cutting of the Kiel Canal); but more important still in the eyes of the Prussian statesman was the opportunity to settle an old score and to destroy once and for ever the rivalry of Austria.

Austria herself was naturally suspicious of the designs which Prussia had on Schleswig-Holstein. But before he pushed the issue to the test of war, Bismarck was careful to make his dispositions. He brought Italy into alliance by holding out to her the bait of Venice. He purchased French neutrality by other specious promises; and when in 1866 his arrangements were complete and he threw down the gage, he had only Austria and a few feeble German States to take account of. The Prussian army was in splendid fettle; in its new and untried weapon, the breech-loading "needle-gun," it possessed a huge advantage over the Austrian muzzle-loaders; and Von Moltke, its commander, was to prove on many fields the outstanding military genius of his day. Bohemia was invaded. At Sadowa (or Königgrätz) the Austrian army was encountered, nearly twice the Prussian strength. It was signally defeated; and within seven weeks the war was at an end. The Emperor Francis Joseph bowed to fate and abandoned the old claim, until that moment pertinaciously upheld, to be head of Germany. Prussia's turn had come and well she used it. The Northern States of the Confederation were reorganised under her direct control. Hanover, Schleswig-Holstein, and a few other provinces were actually annexed to her possession. The rest, north of the Main, were knit in a close communion, sending their representatives to form a common Parliament or Reichstag in Berlin. Over it was to preside the King of Prussia, holding in his hands the sole executive authority; and behind the King was the Army of the League trained on the Prussian model and with a Prussian in command. One half of Bismarck's scheme was now accomplished. There was but one more war to wage and one more inconvenient neighbour to be dealt with; and the whole of Germany would then be his.

Franco-Prussian War.—The French Emperor, Louis Napoleon, had

perceived too late the dangerous nature of the Prussian Chancellor's designs. He had intervened indeed to plead for Austria—but after her defeat. More recently he had refused to let the Southern German States join the new Prussian league; but already they were secretly in touch with it. At every turn, in fact, he had been fooled by Bismarck; and in the last great duel of diplomacy he was once again to play into his enemy's hands. For it was now clear as day that war must come between them. France could never tolerate a completely Prussian Germany, and Bismarck's next step was therefore to humble France. But, before he picked the quarrel, he was anxious, if possible, to put the Emperor in the wrong. He had not long to wait before the chance occurred. In 1869 the throne of Spain fell vacant; and for want of a better candidate



FIG. 52.—THE FRENCH FRONTIER, 1870 AND 1920.

it was offered to Prince Leopold, a Hohenzollern of the Prussian royal house. This, as Napoleon thought and perhaps rightly, was a bid on the part of Prussia to make Spain subservient to herself. He at once demanded the withdrawal of the Hohenzollern candidate; and much to his surprise the Hohenzollern candidate withdrew. That Napoleon was no peace lover we have already seen; and he was now, to say the least of it, a trifle disappointed that the trouble should blow over without a chance of even rattling his sword. So he sent his envoy Benedetti to interview King William and demand a complete disavowal of all designs on Spain. They met at a little German watering-place called Ems. Firmly, but politely, the King refused to engage himself to any promise such as was required. Politely also the ambassador withdrew; and, when he asked for a second interview, the King declared it to be impossible, then telegraphed the whole story of the meeting to Berlin.

There Bismarck was waiting, anxious and impatient. War was what he wanted; but he wished it to appear that the French, not he, began it. The telegram from Ems gave him his chance. By careful omissions, but without altering a word, he made it read as though Benedetti had been guilty of gross discourtesy, and that the King's refusal of a second interview had been a well-merited snub. In this form the telegram was then published in the Press. France blazed with indignation at the insult to her envoy. In a hot fit of military ardour Paris shrieked for war; and, though at this last moment Napoleon shrank from the plunge, he was compelled to take it. On 19th July he declared war upon Prussia.

Bismarck had got his war, and on the terms he wished; and now the armies, not of the Prussian league alone, but of the whole German nation were soon marching on the Rhine. Those armies were incomparably the finest in the world; their mobilization, which had long been planned, was carried out like clockwork; and not a train, so it is said, ran a minute behind time. Within a fortnight 380,000 men were massed and ready to advance on the French frontier. The French, meanwhile, were living in a fool's paradise. They had some grounds, it is true, for confidence; their new breech-loading rifle called the "chasse-pot" was a vast improvement on the Prussian "needle-gun." They had some advantage too in the deadly "mitrailleuse." But their organization was hopelessly at fault. Their numbers, when collected, fell short of the German by 100,000 men. Their reservists arrived late. Many had not been trained in the use of their new rifles. Even their very confidence betrayed them; and the only maps provided were maps of Germany. It was not these that would be wanted.

While the French were thus concerned in grandiose schemes of paper strategy and in shouting "A Berlin!" the German corps were aligned in their position. On 6 August their southern army, acting in the neighbourhood of Strasburg, fell on MacMahon at Wörth, and practically destroyed him. His scattered remnant fell back in rout towards Paris. Half-way to the capital he rallied it at Chalons; but in his crippled state he could only sit and watch the issue in the northern theatre. There round the formidable fortress town of Metz was concentrated the bulk of the French army. Bazaine was in command; but Napoleon's fatal influence (for he was there in person) hung like a mill-stone round his neck. On the news of MacMahon's defeat, but after days of perilous delay and indecision, the order was given for retreat. But it came too late. Von Moltke's dispositions had been as masterly as the French were incoherent. His troops had crept round Metz; and, as Bazaine endeavoured to slip westward, they barred the way near the heights of Gravelotte. A tremendous battle followed. Bazaine was beaten, forced to fall back on Metz, and there besieged by the victorious German army. Between it and Paris lay now but the broken remnant of MacMahon. Prudence demanded that he should remain to shield the capital. But this would have been a plain confession

that the war was lost. Madness prevailed; and against his better judgment MacMahon set forth to the succour of Bazaine. He did not march directly upon Metz, but moved up north through Rheims, and thence towards Stenay on the Meuse, hoping thus to throw the Germans off the scent. But they were already after him. Troops had been detached from the southern and central armies; and, when he reached the river, they were there. Little by little, by a succession of attacks, they shepherded him north, until at Sedan he found himself encircled by overwhelming numbers. His men fought bravely, as the jaws of the trap closed in; but on 1 September it was clear that all was over. Napoleon (who had at least the grace to remain loyally with his army) surrendered with 80,000 men. Bismarck himself was present, as with tears of bitter shame the miserable man acknowledged the ruin of his hopes and of his country.

The German Empire.—The war was won; but the French would not admit it. Bazaine held on in Metz; yet his defence was so half-hearted that suspicions of his treason have often been entertained; and late in October the town was given up. Strasburg after long privations suffered the same fate. At Paris meanwhile a grim tragedy was played. On the news of Napoleon's surrender at Sedan, the indignant citizens declared a new Republic; and under the leadership of Gambetta and Jules Favre the city had been put in a state of siege. Its ring defences were too powerful for assault; and the Germans had no choice but to sit down and wait. For four months of slow starvation the besieged held on; then, on 30 January, 1871, came the end, and the enemy marched in triumph through the Paris streets. The victor's terms were harsh. Bismarck did not believe in sentiment, where empires were at stake; and thanks to her Emperor's folly France had brought her punishment on her own head. She was compelled to pay an indemnity of £200,000,000—a sum which, seeing it paid with ease within three years, the Germans much regretted having fixed so low. Alsace and Lorraine, which had been a part of France since their annexation by Louis XIV, were ceded to Germany. Though Bismarck protested that this went beyond his wish, it was conceived in the spirit he had taught. And indeed, in more ways than one, the victory set a seal on his life's work. The war had been a crowning proof of Prussia's powers of leadership; and now it appeared that the States of Southern Germany were no less eager than the North to acknowledge her as head. A fortnight before the capitulation of Paris, their representatives had waited on King William in his headquarters at Versailles. There, in the palace of the old French kings, the union was accomplished. Germany was declared henceforth to be one realm—and at its head was William Hohenzollern, no longer "King of Prussia," but "Emperor" now from the Danube to the sea. They little dreamt these homely, musical, peace-loving folk of Baden, Bavaria, and the rest—to what unlovely engine of militant autocracy they had henceforth hitched their car. Germany, indeed, had found unity at last—but she had bartered away her soul.

England had watched these doings on the Continent with a spectator's interest, but with varying sympathy. Towards the cause of Italian independence she had naturally been partial; and short of material help she had done all in her power to forward it. When the war was over and Garibaldi came to London, he had been fêted as a hero; and Italian gratitude, such as it was to be, had not been wholly unearned. Over the Franco-Prussian duel, however, British public opinion went curiously astray. France got little sympathy upon the other side of the Channel, where Louis Napoleon had always been regarded as an inconvenient, and perhaps a dangerous, neighbour. During the late fifties there had been talk of a French war and even scares of an invasion. To meet such imagined peril the "Volunteer" movement had been started, and upwards of two hundred thousand private citizens had been enrolled in this amateur militia. Napoleon's name was naturally unpopular; and Englishmen were not sorry at the last to see his fall. For Germany, on the other hand, England kept a warm corner in her heart. The Prince Consort was a German; and his presence in England had done much to commend his country's cause. There was now a growing tendency to look on the Teutonic cousins as a kindred race. Carlyle had taught the English to admire their sterling qualities; their literature and music were beginning to be studied and admired. There was soon, in fact, to be a regular cult for all things German, and the Briton, always ready to patronize success, came to think of the matchless efficiency which had won the war with France as something to emulate, but not as yet to fear.¹ So quickly and so strangely do international relations shift and change. Few then would have believed that in the next great struggle England would be fighting against Germany with France.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONSERVATIVE IDEAL

Party Politics.—While the world without was thus busy with the making and marring of great empires, and loud with the tumult of embattled hosts, England pursued in contented isolation the prosperous tenor of her way. The remainder of the century was for her no heroic or agitating period. She waged no wars except against the ill-matched arms of restless savages. She knew no such burning issues, no such days of painful crisis, as had vexed her peace in the preceding age. The struggles of 1832 and 1847 had been decisive. The twofold triumph of political reform and of economic freedom had broken down the barriers, and the unchecked flood of democratic progress flowed onward in a smoother stream. The masses, no longer starving, forgot their

¹ British sympathy, however, shifted somewhat towards the French, when Prussia's ruthless terms had been disclosed.

grievances of Corn Law days; and bit by bit they too were to be admitted to a participation in the country's government. In other words, these were years, not of revolutionary upheaval, but of patient building, "line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and a little there." The foundations of England's future had in fact been firmly laid; and henceforward there was question only of the style which the upper edifice should take. There were two rival sets of architects—the Conservatives and the Liberals; but between the alternative policies of these the People were now judge.

It is no easy matter to acquire the habit of self-government. The man in the street is slow to use real discernment in the casting of his vote; and too often even now he will follow an ingrained prejudice or a specious party cry in preference to the dictates of sound sense. Nevertheless the English people started with a certain natural aptitude for politics. They had long been accustomed to the theory, if not to the practice, of representative ideals. Education too was spreading; more schools were being built; and in 1876 attendance was declared compulsory for every child. Meantime the newspaper did valuable service by instructing the public in the problems of the day. The Press was already a well-established and efficient institution. No country in Europe could boast its counterpart; and its influence was the greater for the high sense it entertained of its own responsibility; for the days were not yet come when circulation was the one thought uppermost in the editorial mind; nor was self-advertisement considered a more important matter than the dissemination of the daily news. Papers of course took sides, as they do now; but for the most part they were enlightened partisans, willing to acknowledge an error or even, if need were, to criticize the conduct of their favourites. The "Times," in particular, was a most outspoken and independent critic of political affairs.¹ De-lane, its editor, was the friend and confidant of many Ministers; but he never scrupled to denounce the Government in power, if he thought its policy mistaken; and both in and out of England he spoke with an authority which few members of the Cabinet could equal. Political sympathies, in fact, no longer ran in narrow, predestined grooves of social prejudice. In the old days, as we have seen, the son inherited his opinions along with his father's factory or acres; and a man's vote was almost invariably conditioned by his education or his class. Now, however, like "The Times" newspaper, a large part of the community was becoming more and more independent in its outlook. Still, no doubt, there were inveterate Tory squires who would continue to vote Conservative till the end of time, and radical enthusiasts who would sooner far have died than desert the Liberal party. But the bulk perhaps of middle-class opinion was not convincingly in favour of one side or the

¹ Even more independent and detached was the attitude of "Punch." Nothing reflects so well the better class opinion of Victorian times as the weekly cartoons of Sir John Tenniel. Their humour does not conceal the serious vein beneath; and as comment even on the most vital issues, they seldom miss the mark.

other; rather were men inclined to note the shortcomings of the party which was "in" and therefore to vote at an election for the party which was "out." So changes of Ministry were apt to be more frequent. The pendulum swings from side to side with a regularity unknown in earlier days; and Liberals and Conservatives appear and disappear upon the Treasury Bench, like the puppet figures of the gentleman and lady in the cheap bric-à-brac barometer.

The fact is that in latter-day politics there has not been the same clean-cut divergence of opinion that had existed between the Tories and the Whigs. *Their* battle had been fought and finished; and the old Whig battle-cry of "the Individual's Liberty" had lost much of its significance with victory. One cannot go on fighting for a cause which has been won; and the individual Englishman was now as free as he could wish. The State no longer dictated his beliefs, nor restricted his expression of opinion, nor even, since 1847, controlled his trade. Whiggery, in short, was out of date; and the Liberal Party, though heir to its "individualist" tradition, grew gradually less tender about the Individual's Rights and more friendly to the opposite principle of State Control. So, generally speaking, it became the endeavour of both Liberals and Conservatives alike to make the people happier and better, not through liberty, but through *compulsion*, enacting laws which, for example, compelled all children to attend a school, or all employers to render compensation for accidents befalling their employees. By neither party was State interference regarded any longer as an evil; by the Conservatives, following in the footsteps of the Tories, it had always been regarded as a good. Both parties therefore, though in different ways, had reforms and improvements to propose. The Conservatives were more tentative and cautious, eager to "conserve" what was most valuable in the traditions of the past, and ready only for such changes as appeared to be in harmony with these. The Liberals, on the other hand, looked forward and not back, preferring to aim at an ideal in the future rather than to rest upon the traditions of the past, and shaping their policy according to a noble, but somewhat vague, conception of what a true democracy should be. Both, as was natural, kept their eyes on the electorate, considering what measures would appeal to their supporters and win them popularity at future polls. Vote-catching, it cannot be denied, is a sore temptation to the modern politician; yet in a sense also it is of the very essence of democracy. The public is seldom fully conscious of its needs, until it finds them either satisfied or flouted. If, therefore, a Government is at all to represent the people, it must endeavour to interpret these unexpressed desires and anticipate the country's wants by timely legislation. To a large degree, therefore, the genius of a democratic Minister consists in gauging accurately the direction in which the nation's mind will move; and success or failure in this difficult task will explain to some extent the rise and fall of the various governments and premiers during the period with which we are about to deal. Set in brief, the changes were as follows: Soon after

the death of Palmerston in 1865, the Liberals lost the confidence of Parliament; and the Conservatives, though without a true majority and so dependent for support on other sections of the House, took office in their stead. This Ministry lasted but a bare two years; and at the General Election of 1868 the Liberals were once again returned to power. They held it through a busy period of six years; and then, for the first time since the disastrous party-split over the Corn Laws, the Conservatives came by their own. From 1874 they governed with a handsome majority until in 1880 their opponents once more regained the upper hand; but with that we may leave the chequered phases of this see-saw struggle and turn to the consideration of each party's aims, failures, and achievements. Let the Conservatives stand first.

Conservatives and Disraeli.—The story of the evolution of the Conservative ideal is, strange to say, the story not of blue-blooded aristocrats or fox-hunting squires, but of the Jew, Benjamin Disraeli, promoted in 1876 to be Earl of Beaconsfield. One starts at the anomaly; that an eccentric man of letters of alien blood should have succeeded in rallying a group of rebellious Tories against their master, Peel, was queer enough; but that for the twenty years which followed he should have kept his hold, and become the accredited champion of a party yielding to none in pride of birth and station, this seems to touch on the miraculous. Sheer force of personality accomplished much; but fortune, too, assisted. The Conservative party were not, upon the whole, a very brilliant lot. There was a dearth of genuine talent, an absence of large ideas; and Disraeli stood a head and shoulders above the common herd. His acute instinct for Parliamentary strategy and his great gift of sarcastic repartee made him an ideal leader of an Opposition; and during the period of their temporary eclipse the Conservatives soon found that they could not do without him. During Lord Derby's two short-lived administrations of 1852 and 1858 Disraeli had already served as Chancellor of the Exchequer. His character had then asserted itself strongly; and now, when in 1866 Lord Derby resumed office, there could be little question which was the more important person of the two. As leader of the Commons Disraeli shouldered a responsibility of no light order. The Conservatives had a bad reputation to live down. They had resisted the nation's will over the Reform Bill. Many of them had selfishly upheld the hated Corn Laws. Their most cherished principles had suffered on both issues an irretrievable defeat; and, when now they entered upon office, they scarcely knew for what their party stood. Yet, before they vacated it just two years later, they had caught the inspiration of a new political faith; they had learnt that Conservatism could transcend the narrow interest of a single class and could represent a great national ideal. This was Disraeli's work; and the explanation of the Jew's success is perhaps the most fascinating puzzle of modern politics.

Disraeli's Character.—It would be idle to deny that in his early years Disraeli was something of a hypocrite. He had posed as a Tory,

because he saw the opportunity to cut a figure; and his eloquent championship of the landed aristocracy was little better than a brilliant *tour de force*. Yet the strangest thing about the man was this: when once an idea had seized hold upon his mind and kindled the fire of his imagination, it became a part of him. He would throw it into the shape of some arresting clear-cut phrase; and, by the time he had repeated it on four or five occasions, he believed it heart and soul. Of the essential truth of his Conservative principles, Disraeli was by now as utterly convinced as if he had been born a titled landowner or the Duke of Wellington himself. Yet perhaps after all it was no mere accident that Disraeli's mind should have run in this direction. The glamour of the past appealed in a high degree to his oriental instinct for romance. The picturesque dignity and time-hallowed prestige of the English aristocracy stirred his imagination; he loved the antique pomp of ceremonial and the finery and decorations of court dress. He would have been a Royalist, had he lived under the Stuarts; had he served Elizabeth, he would have been a second Raleigh. To him there was no sense of affectation about such sentiments, and his heart swelled with honest British pride when he spoke of "our ancient heritage," "our immemorial throne," or "the good old cause." Wholly in keeping with this character was his conception of the function of the monarchy. We must have "a real crown," he said; and, unlike Palmerston, he never forgot that a Minister is the servant of the sovereign. Queen Victoria was living at this time a life of strict seclusion. In 1861 her husband, the Prince Albert, had died of typhoid fever. Though of foreign birth, his lofty character, shrewd sense, and zeal for England had gradually dispelled suspicion and endeared him to the people, and his death caused sincere regret. But it broke Victoria's heart. For nearly twenty years after the sad event she stubbornly refused to be consoled or even to appear at all in public. But, while she nursed her sorrow in the privacy of the palace, she pluckily maintained her interest in national affairs. She liked to keep in touch with all that happened; and Disraeli treated her wish with an obsequious deference. Flattery was an art of which none was greater master; compliments came readily to his tongue; and in the case of royalty we have it on his own confession that he "laid it on with a trowel." Victoria was not duped; but she did not resent the attitude; and her personal relations with her favourite Minister were close and intimate. At the palace he was always most cordially received; and the interchange of letters upon affairs of State was accompanied by curious little tokens of esteem. At the end of a dispatch, written at the time of a big crisis, Victoria adds, "The Queen sends some camelias grown in the open air and primroses for Lord Beaconsfield." "Lord Beaconsfield," comes the answer, "is deeply touched by Your Majesty's gracious kindness in deigning to send him some flowers from Your Majesty's island home. Truly he can say they are 'more precious than rubies,' coming as they do and at such a moment from a sovereign whom he adores." Language of this sort is apt to sound

extravagant to our prosaic ears; but there is small doubt Disraeli meant or thought he meant it. Your true Conservative observes a proper reverence for the person of his sovereign.

Second Reform Bill.—Contradictory as it seems upon first sight, the most important measure of the new Conservative administration was an extension of the franchise. Talk of another Reform Bill had been much in the air of late. The Liberals had not forgotten the success of 1832; and though they fell from office in the attempt to pass it, they had propounded a fresh measure. Once, over the repeal of the Corn Laws, Disraeli had twitted Peel with "having caught the Whigs bathing and made off with their clothes." Yet this is precisely what he was doing now; having stolen an idea from the Liberals he used it as his own; and indeed this Conservative measure was to go a great deal further than did theirs.¹ By the Reform of 1832, it will be remembered, the vote had been accorded to borough householders of £10 annual rating. Now it was proposed to give *every* urban householder a vote, and to reduce the limit for county householders from £50 to £12.¹ To put it in plain English, this meant the enfranchisement of perhaps a million persons, and these not decent middle-class respectabilities, but horny-handed labourers and artisans. About such a measure qualms very naturally arose among the rank and file of the Conservatives. That it was a bold experiment, "a leap in the dark," Lord Derby himself admitted; and Disraeli's chief business, as he afterwards declared, was to "educate his own party." Nevertheless, by infinite tact and conciliatory handling, he got the measure through. For him it was a wonderful triumph of personality; yet how are we to square it with the Conservative principles he preached? If the party believed in anything at all, they believed in government by gentlefolk, and not by artisans; and the extension of democracy by a one-time Tory Cabinet must seem, to say the least of it, a contradiction in terms. Partly, no doubt, this paradox may be explained by a not unnatural nor unpardonable anxiety to forestall their opponents and gain the credit for this act of grace. "Don't you see," said Lord Derby, "how we have dished the Whigs?"

But there was more in it than this. The motive at the bottom of Disraeli's mind was true-blue Conservative. He saw that through the centuries the working class had normally accepted the nobility and gentry as their leaders; he believed that their reverence for tradition was still strong; and he was prepared to prophesy that, once they had the vote, they would use it in the interest of the "good old cause." Precisely, therefore, as the Whigs had won adherents by extending the franchise to the middle class, so now the Conservatives might swell their own majority by winning the alliance of the workers. It was a bold speculation; and, if it did nothing else, it showed this much at least, that Disraeli's party was prepared to trust the people, and to place

¹ In 1858 the Conservatives had already drafted a Reform Bill much more on the Liberal lines. The idea, however, of launching out more boldly was only arrived at during the course of the 1866 Ministry.

the national interest before the interest of their class. In the long run, too, the prophecy was justified; for in the south especially the newly enfranchised workers have given the Conservatives almost continuous support. But in the immediate issue Disraeli was cheated of his hope. Six months after the passage of the Bill, Lord Derby resigned, a victim to the gout; and for the vacant premiership one choice alone was possible. So the dream of Disraeli's ambition was fulfilled. "Yes," he said proudly to his political friends, "I have climbed at last to the top of the greasy pole"—but he was not to stay there long. The Conservatives had never commanded a true majority in Parliament; and the attack of the Opposition soon became so dangerous that the new Prime Minister was forced to take refuge in an appeal to the electorate. From this indeed he did not shrink. He trusted to the gratitude of the newly enfranchised masses, and counted on the vote of the "Conservative working man" to pull him through. But the working man was, for this time at any rate, neither Conservative nor grateful; and he let Disraeli down. The Liberals were returned with a big majority; and the net result of the great "leap in the dark" was to land its hopeful authors in the ditch.

Disraeli's Second Government.—Yet Disraeli struggled on, undaunted by discouragement; and six years later he had his due reward. The Liberal cause had not prospered in the interval. Gladstone was thought to have made a thorough mess of foreign policy; and the character of his domestic legislation had not increased his popularity at home. At the General Election of 1874 the country showed its anger. The pendulum swung back with a vengeance; and the Conservatives came in with the first genuine majority they had enjoyed since Corn Law days. "They are in for years," said their crestfallen opponents; and the prophecy was true. Disraeli's day had come—but it had come late—perhaps too late. The Jew was already in his seventieth year; the buoyancy of his youth and the vigour of his prime were gone; even he himself was conscious of the shadow which age casts. Yet, so long as his brain could think, ideas came flowing from it. He was still the master-mind among a powerful Cabinet. Maturer wisdom gave him a firmer grasp; he knew he had the country at his back; and now at any rate he meant to show them what a "Tory Democracy" could do.

With the aid of two most capable lieutenants, Richard Cross and Stafford Northcote, he undertook a series of great measures to improve the conditions of the working class. Such improvement was very sorely needed. The great industrial towns had sprung up all too rapidly; no forethought had been given to their building or their planning; slums of the most horrible description abounded everywhere; the wretched inmates were crowded like sardines, several families often living in one room, while the actual conditions under which they worked were often scandalous. Disraeli was following in Lord Shaftesbury's footsteps and, therefore, in a sound Conservative tradition when he undertook to set such abuses right by legislation. The local authorities in the larger

towns were empowered to pull down houses which were unfit for habitation and to build others in their place. Sanitation was scientifically studied; and a new Factory Act was passed, whereby the regulation of working hours and factory conditions was put upon a firm and settled basis. Nor was this all; for Disraeli realized that, much as the State might help him by such protective legislation, the working man could never really prosper till he could help himself. He saw, what indeed was fast becoming evident, that the Trades Unions must be given a fair chance. Hitherto, though the existence of such bodies was legalized by the Act of 1825, their effectiveness had been seriously curtailed by the nature of the law. Peaceful collaboration and debate about their policy was indeed permitted them; but, if they went so far as to call an actual strike, the Trades Unions became liable at once to prosecution for "conspiracy." In other words, to take joint action about wages, even if no violence should be done, was a crime against the law; and thus, whenever a dispute arose, the masters had the whip-hand of the men. Such a restriction was, of course, most galling to the workers; but there were many strikes in spite of it; and during the early seventies the tension grew extreme. Wild doings were reported from the Midlands; and a certain saw-grinder, James Lindley by name, was mysteriously shot dead by an air gun for having infringed his Union rules. Public opinion was gravely exercised by this condition of affairs; and a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the whole relationship of employers and employed.

The upshot was that in 1876 Disraeli's Government brought in a Bill which was to set the Trades Unions upon an entirely different footing. Henceforward their members were at liberty to strike, and the law was powerless on that score at least to touch them, unless they were guilty of committing, as a body, some act which in an individual would be accounted as a crime. This new-won privilege gave an immense stimulus to the so-called Labour movement. Within the next quarter of a century the membership of Unions rose to upwards of two millions. Strikes became more serious and more numerous; and, though this advance towards industrial freedom was sooner or later an inevitable step, yet one wonders if its author, had he foreseen the final issue, would have remained so certain of its Conservative intent. At the same time we can hardly doubt that he did well. At the very least he had redeemed his promise; and in five years, as an admirer put it, he had done more for the working class of England than the Liberals had in fifty.

Disraeli's Imperialism.—But there remained yet another shaft in the Jew's quiver; and the most important contribution that he made to the Conservative ideal was concerned with things abroad, not things at home. England's foreign policy the public held to have been badly bungled by Gladstone's Liberal Ministry; and their apparent slackness had recently lost England much of her prestige. Continental powers had been allowed to flout her wishes, and even to cancel their treaty obligations without leave. The Colonies, certainly, had not as yet been

valued as highly as they should have been; nor were Liberals alone in viewing them as a purposeless excrescence, the retention of which was a waste of energy and a drain upon England's strength. Disraeli himself had in his day made light of their importance. But, as a Conservative, he was more naturally inclined to methods of strong government, though not after the perverse and fatal manner of Lord North, which had lost England the very prize it was intended to retain. Indeed, there was more of Chatham than of Lord North in Disraeli's composition. He possessed imagination; there was nothing small or petty in his views; and perhaps the very accident of his birth was here a positive advantage; for the Jew is wont to have a cosmopolitan outlook and a width of imagination which are more rarely to be found in the insular views of the homebred Englishman. In any case, if Chatham thought, as they say, in terms of continents, Disraeli may be said to have thought in terms of the world. First, perhaps, of his own generation he conceived of England's mission as a double trust. Her Empire was destined, like the rule of ancient Rome, to unite in one efficient, civilizing system the peoples of many countries, different creeds, and various races. But she was to be no tyrant mistress. Standing for freedom in her own native institutions, she was to hand on the precious heritage to her dominions; and so throughout the world would be spread the same traditions which already had made the English people what they were. In a famous speech delivered at the Guildhall towards the close of his career, Disraeli summed up his ideal in these words: "I know the citizens of London are not ashamed of the Empire which their ancestors created. I know that they will not be beguiled into believing that in maintaining their Empire, they may forfeit their liberties. One of the greatest of Romans, when asked what were his politics, replied '*IMPERIUM ET LIBERTAS*.' Empire and Liberty—that would not make a bad programme for a British Ministry,"—noble sentiments, indeed, and to his own contemporaries at least much less familiar than they are to us.

But Disraeli's time was short and he was old; and, though he sowed the seed of the Imperialist ideal, there was not much tangible result to show. Some few things, however, he was able to effect. It was upon his advice that the Queen assumed her title of Empress of India—a name well calculated to make a deep impression on the Oriental mind. It was he again who was responsible for England's second intervention in Afghanistan and the check there administered to the designs of Russia. Anxiety for British communications with the East led him to one significant and far-sighted act of statesmanship. A dozen years before, in 1864 to be precise, a canal had been constructed through the Suez Isthmus. It had chiefly been the work of a French engineer called Lesseps; and, while nearly half the shares in the enterprise were vested in the "Khedive" or Mohammedan Governor in Egypt, the other half were exclusively retained in the hands of a French company. England had no share; and this was the more disastrous, because her Indian traffic was almost at once diverted from the old Cape route to this much

more expeditious passage. Seeing the importance of Suez to England, Disraeli watched his chance; and in 1875 the chance occurred. The Khedive's treasury was bankrupt; and he was on the point of parting with his shares in the Canal to a French financial company, when a British agent was instructed to step in with a more tempting offer. On his own initiative (for Parliament was "up") Disraeli undertook to make the deal. There was no time to be lost, if he was to cut the Frenchmen out; so, in the name of the Government, he borrowed £4,000,000 from the Jewish banker, Baron Lionel de Rothschild; and nearly a half-share interest in the great canal thus passed into England's hands. The Liberals, of course, attacked him for this unauthorized procedure; but the country backed him up, and since then it has had good reason to be thankful for his promptitude and foresight. Disraeli soon followed the transaction up by sending a British representative to Egypt; a good understanding with the Khedive soon gave England an influence not a whit behind the French; and so was laid the basis of her eventual "Occupation" of the country, which has been till now the prop and mainstay of her Empire in the East.

Russia and the Balkans.—In Europe itself Disraeli too did much to redeem England's shaken credit. Bismarck at the moment appeared to dominate the scene; but it was soon made clear that, under a Conservative Government at least, England would truckle to no militarist alive. In 1875 the rapid recovery of France alarmed the Germans and they threatened a new war. Disraeli spoke out strongly; and, with however ill a grace, Bismarck was compelled for once to knuckle down. The continental power, however, which gave England the most trouble was not Germany, but Russia. As we have said above,¹ the ambitions of the Tsar led him in 1875 to support the revolution of the Balkan States against the Sultan's tyranny. This renewed menace of the aggrandizement of Russia was promptly, though not decisively, resisted. Disraeli issued a grave warning, and to show himself in earnest dispatched a British squadron up the Dardanelles. As England did not go so far as to declare war, this backing was not more than sufficient to save the Sultan's face; and soon after, an arrangement was patched up whereby the revolted provinces became independent of the Turk. Its details, however, were not considered satisfactory by the other European powers; a conference was summoned at Berlin to revise and countersign the settlement; and Disraeli himself, though he was rising eighty, went out to represent his Government. This mission marked, perhaps, the zenith of his fame. Even Bismarck was impressed by his strong personality. "The old Jew, he's the man," was his curt, but telling comment; and indeed it was the Jew's firm stand in the face of exaggerated Russian claims that brought the conference to its successful issue. On his return Disraeli received a great ovation; but the fickle country soon showed that in its judgment his vigorous foreign policy had gone too far and the Government been too adventurous. At the heat of the

¹ See page 617.

crisis there had been plenty of enthusiasm; and British pride had shown itself in unusually bellicose behaviour, of which the notorious music-hall ditty of the day was a somewhat crude reflection:—

We don't want to fight; but by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, and we've got the money too.¹

But there was a foolish exaggeration about such mock-heroics; and, in the cooler fit that followed, the public came to realize how much England had been risking. At the General Election which was held in 1880 Disraeli was heavily defeated at the polls. He immediately resigned, a worn-out and in some ways a disappointed man. He died in the following year.

There is no stranger phenomenon in modern times than the career of this man, who began life as a self-advertising free-lance and ended it a public institution. His weaknesses were many; but the proof of his greatness lies in the impression he has made. His conception of a party which should combine respect for inherited tradition with a real enthusiasm for democratic progress laid the foundations of a new political creed. His vision of an Empire which should combine strength and unity with enlightenment and freedom has inspired the British nation with the sense of a new mission in the world. He was respected in his day, as few before or since; and his memory has long been kept alive by the regular observance of an anniversary—called “Primrose Day” after his favourite flower—an honour accorded, it is true, to some dozen others of his race, but to them for a reason curiously diverse.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LIBERAL IDEAL

Gladstone's Character.—What Disraeli was to the Conservatives, Gladstone was to the Liberals. In many ways indeed he was far more. No one nowadays can claim such hero-worship as he enjoyed during the seventies and eighties. Something in the upright tenor of his life, in the austere dignity of his carriage, and in the resounding periods of his rhetoric made a peculiar and unique appeal to the English middle classes; and in many a front parlour, hung in the place of honour above the mantelpiece, you may still see the portrait of the familiar features of the “Grand Old Man.” The upper class, however, were of a different way of thinking; to them Mr. Gladstone was anathema. They could believe of him nothing that was good. Party malice leads often to crude judgments upon character; but here, as in Disraeli's case, we are faced with a singular political conundrum when we must answer how it was that a man whom half the country had agreed to idolize and had placed

¹ The song added a new word to our political vocabulary; and the term “Jingo” has come to be used of a man who advocates an extreme and bellicose Imperialism.

almost on the level of a saint was regarded by the other half, with just as much conviction, as a hypocritical self-interested cheat.

Gladstone was a man of supreme and many-sided gifts. At Oxford he won first-class honours in Classics as well as Mathematics. His reading was extraordinarily wide. He was an erudite Homeric scholar. He was a close student of Theology; and his memory for detail was prodigious. Such a training served him in good stead when he came to be a Minister. He was never at a loss over the intricate contents of a budget; and it was a clever man who caught him tripping over the clauses of a Bill. The more difficult a subject, the more he loved to grapple with its problems; and his keen intellect was shown at its perfection in sifting and dissecting some tough point. In argument he was marvellously persuasive. To hear Gladstone was to be convinced. Read in cold blood, indeed, his speeches sound somewhat over subtle, and give the impression of trying to prove too much. But, heard on the platform, he was very different. There have been few more impassioned orators than Gladstone. He threw his whole soul into the words; and, though the strength of his emotions never dulled his own power of thinking, it would carry his audience into transports of excitement. Such orators are apt to be narrow in their outlook and blind partisans of one idea. But Gladstone was anything but narrow. On most topics he kept his mind wonderfully open; and one reason why he made such bitter enemies was that he so often changed it. Like Peel, whose political disciple he had been, he underwent many unpredictable conversions, and in his later years we find him going back on several principles which it had been his previous practice to uphold.

In this Gladstone was typical perhaps of his party. Whether the Liberal ideal was of his making or whether the Liberal ideal had itself made him would be difficult to say; but it is at least equally difficult to say what precisely the Liberal ideal was. To define Conservative principles is simple; for they are built upon the experience of the past. But the Liberal, as we said, looks forward to the future and to what he considers the ultimate perfection of the State. Here there is clearly room for infinite speculation; and if the Liberal may even change his mind about the goal at which he aims, much more is he apt to be in two opinions about the steps which lead to it. So the Liberal has been defined as a man who knows better what he does not want than what he does; and of Gladstone himself there are different verdicts given. Some enthusiasts would say that he followed the star; some that it was merely a will-o'-the-wisp, assuming, according to the change of circumstance, many various and highly inconsistent shapes. Others again more cynically inclined would declare that all the while he was fumbling in the dark.

For length of duration and for the eminence of his position Gladstone's career beat all Parliamentary records. He was four times Prime Minister, for twenty-eight years leader of his party, for sixty-three years a member of the House of Commons. He began his political life as

a Tory and a firm adherent of Peel, under whom, when but twenty-five years old, he first held office. At the crisis of the Corn Law controversy, he remained faithful to his master and refused to follow the discontented Tories into opposition. Then, after sitting on the fence for a space of fifteen years, he made his final choice between the parties and became a thorough-going Liberal. Under Palmerston he served as Chancellor of the Exchequer, making his name as a supreme master of finance; and after Palmerston's death the mantle of that last great Whig descended on his shoulders. He became Prime Minister in 1868 after Disraeli's famous failure at the polls. He was thrown out in 1874; but in 1880 he returned and held office for five years. Then came the momentous decision to propose Home Rule for Ireland, the split which it produced within the party, its discussion, and its ultimate defeat. Gladstone fell; and, though from 1892 to 1894 we find him once more at the head of a Liberal Ministry, he never again recovered the commanding position he had held in English politics. Two years before the ending of the century, in which he had been so dominant a figure, he died in his ninetieth year.

Gladstone's Finance.—Gladstone's policy may be summed in the three words "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform." It was a true Whig motto; and if of the three words we should except the last, it might well have stood for the policy of Walpole. Financial stability, and commercial prosperity were in Gladstone's judgment the touchstone of a Ministry's success. He was, as we have said, a great financier, and his finance was learnt in the Free Trade School of the converted Peel. The work which Peel had begun he carried to completion, and reduced the number of taxes upon imports to the barest minimum. He believed that the less a Government was spending and the fewer the taxes that were raised, the better it would be for every one. The Income Tax he intended, if possible, to abolish. In this he never succeeded; but once during the sixties (it is enough to make the modern Briton's mouth water) he actually reduced it to 4d. in the pound. To accomplish this the strictest economy was needed, and Gladstone cut down ruthlessly the expenditure on public services. The Navy and Army were much reduced—his enemies said starved. In 1871, however, having witnessed the terrible collapse of France, the country grew alarmed about its military weakness; and Gladstone himself was compelled to mend his ways. Cardwell, his Minister for War, produced a scheme, whereby soldiers were enlisted upon shorter terms of service after the model of the efficient German army; while the total number of the forces of the Crown, Reservists and Volunteers included, was raised to nearly half a million. These changes were expensive; but despite of it Gladstone was always able to show a surplus on his budget, and even to pay off a considerable portion of the accumulated National Debt. Liberals of later days have come to see that public money can be more bountifully spent to great advantage, and that large expenditure on the people's health, efficiency, and education may prove in the long run

a true economy. Nevertheless there is a golden mean in all things; and the extravagance of modern Ministers might find a useful antidote, if the wisdom and experience of this great financier were more often borne in mind.

But Gladstone was no mere miserly economist. It was natural he should believe, as all good Free Traders did, in leaving the individual to look after himself and to work out, if possible, his own salvation without interference from the State. But he equally believed in giving the individual a fair chance. Some share, for instance, in the country's government he held to be the right of every responsible and reputable citizen. He had already prepared the way, as we have seen, for an extension of the franchise, when Disraeli came along in 1867 and picked the idea as it were out of his pocket. The actual credit for the Second Reform Bill was of course Disraeli's; but, as some shrewd critic put it, the working man who thereby got the vote said "Thank you, Mr. Gladstone." And the day was soon to come when Gladstone too would play his proper part in the building up of England's democratic constitution. In 1872 he passed a Bill by which votes were to be cast by Secret Ballot. The advantages of such a course were obvious; bribery or intimidation by influential candidates became less possible; and the people's liberty to exercise its judgment was rid of all illegitimate constraints. Finally, by a Third Reform Bill passed in 1884, Gladstone extended the franchise to the agricultural labourer, excluded in Disraeli's Bill by the £12 county limit. At the same time, to counterbalance the preponderant numbers of the rural population, he arranged for a readjustment of the seats, taking their members from the smaller county boroughs and giving them to the large industrial towns. Meanwhile Gladstone had found many opportunities of improving the condition of the masses. Nor did he shrink from using State compulsion, if it seemed in the true interests of the folk. He passed a fresh Bill for regulating mines; another for the institution of Bank holidays; a third compelling masters to compensate their workmen for injuries received in their employ.

Education Act.—But by far the most beneficent of the numerous reforms standing to the credit of the Liberal leader was the Education Act of 1870. Since the beginning of Victoria's reign small grants amounting to a few thousand pounds a year had been made for education. But, though these sums were increased as time went on, there was still no national system. Schools, such as there were, had been provided by the various Churches and other philanthropic bodies; some were kept by private teachers; and what type of teachers this method might produce, the readers of "Nicholas Nickleby" will know. Gladstone recognized that the time had come for change, and that an illiterate democracy was an absurdity. To give the people control of State affairs and at the same time to leave them ignorant seemed useless; and "now," as a waggish politician put it, "we must educate our masters." So in 1870, under Gladstone's supervision, a Bill was intro-

duced by Mr. Forster. Henceforth, wherever the existing schools were deemed inadequate, "public" schools were to be provided out of the local rates. Parents were to contribute to the expense of such establishments, up to a weekly maximum of 9d. The local authorities were empowered, but not commanded, to make attendance compulsory and truancy punishable by fine. This was the first great step towards a universal system. It remained (as was done in 1876) to exact compulsory attendance in all parts, then (as was done in 1891) to exempt the parent from the payment of all fees; and with that the national system of free elementary education was placed upon the footing which it occupies to-day. Thus Gladstone at a stroke gave a stimulus to democratic progress such as no amount of factory laws, mine acts, or housing regulations could ever have afforded. He had made it possible for the people of England to learn to think for themselves; and having thought, to act. The results are manifest in England still. Some doubtless have regretted Gladstone's step. Others have wisely questioned whether education has gone far enough. But the odd thing is that Gladstone's own contemporaries were on the whole against him. One clause in the Bill ruled out the teaching of any religious dogma in the national schools. The exemption, however, of the schools provided from the Established Church's funds aroused the jealousy of Nonconformists; and their annoyance was in part the cause of Gladstone's own undoing. The Nonconformists are chiefly to be found among the middle classes; and since the middle classes' vote, as a rule, controls the polls, their alienation was a serious matter. The result was seen in the election of 1874, when, despite all that he had done for the welfare of the people, the Liberal leader found his followers deserting him. By a decisive majority his party was thrown again from power.

Policy Towards Turkey and Egypt.—For the six years following Gladstone was condemned to sit on the Opposition bench and watch his arch-enemy Disraeli handling England's affairs. There were tremendous passages of arms between them; and very evenly the two were matched. They had many points at issue, but perhaps the most important concerned British Foreign Policy. In domestic matters, as we have already seen, there was not much to choose between Conservatives and Liberals; but over Foreign Policy there was a sharp divergence in their views. Gladstone, as a rule, was not for meddling in other people's business; he believed that England would do best by keeping to herself; but if she meddled, then he, like all good Whigs and all good Liberals, was a fervent advocate of Liberty.

A sentimental sympathy for struggling nationalities was one of the guiding principles of his career. In earlier days he had made Englishmen's blood boil by describing the prison cells in which the King of Naples confined the unhappy victims of his royal displeasure; and when in 1875 the Balkan States rebelled against the Turkish Sultan, Gladstone, unlike Disraeli, was on the rebels' side. The Turks, in their frantic efforts to hold down their Christian subjects, had recourse, as

usual, to the most violent measures. In Bulgaria they let loose upon the helpless peasants a savage horde of soldiers, known as the Bashi-Bazouks. Newspaper correspondents sent tidings home to England of the horrible massacres which had ensued; and in the somewhat exaggerated tale of these so-called "Bulgarian Atrocities" Mr. Gladstone found a useful weapon whereby to push home his point. He denounced Turkey on the platform. He wrote a pamphlet which was sold by tens of thousands; and the wave of indignation he aroused did much to dissuade the Government from intervening on the Turkish side. As we have seen, Disraeli kept the peace; and at the Congress of Berlin he effected some sort of compromise between the claim of Russia to control the Balkans and England's traditional undertaking to support the Turk. Whether his view was right or wrong, it was the prevailing view of English nineteenth-century statesmen. Gladstone stood alone in his denunciation of the Turks; and, in his enthusiasm for the cause of the downtrodden Christian States, he completely disregarded the important rôle played by the Turkish Empire in preventing Russian access to England's Empire in the East. "Cosmopolitan critics, friends of every country but their own," was Disraeli's sneering jibe; and there was a certain truth in it. The Liberal politician, wrapt away among the clouds of his ideals, is sometimes apt to overlook the practical realities which lie before his feet. The necessities of action may bring him down to earth; but, while he endeavours to square his lofty principles with awkward facts, he hesitates and does not know his mind; or, knowing it, he lacks the resolution to make good.

Gordon in Khartoum.—When in 1880 Disraeli retired from office and Gladstone once again took up the reins, circumstances were soon destined to arise which would reveal this Liberal weakness in a strong and none too creditable light. The trouble came in Egypt. There, since Disraeli's purchase of the Suez shares, a policy of intervention had been slowly forced upon Britain. The Khedive's finances had gone from bad to worse; and in 1879 a certain Captain Baring, better known by his later title of Lord Cromer, was sent out from England at the Khedive's own request to put things straight. His presence there worked marvels; but the natives much resented such foreign interference, and in 1881 an insurrection under Arabi Bey had turned the country upside down again. The bloodthirsty massacre of some European residents had soon forced the British Government to act. Her fleet bombarded the coast town of Alexandria; and, with some troops brought up from India, Sir Garnet Wolseley defeated the rebels at Tel-el-Kebir and occupied the country. Such a step, of course, was contrary to Gladstone's Liberal principles. The requirements of the Empire or the commercial importance of the great canal did not appeal to him; and, rather than trample on the sacred rights of Egyptian nationality, he was determined to evacuate the country as soon as ever it seemed safe. He little guessed what troubles were in store. While the rebellion of Arabi was taking place in Egypt, the Sudan too was

up in arms against the Khedive's Government. A fanatical prophet, who proclaimed himself the Mahdi or Mohammedan Messiah, had stirred the savage tribesmen to an ecstasy of fervour and mad hate; and soon they had driven the Egyptian garrison into the fortress of Khartoum. A British officer sent with a native force to its relief was overwhelmed and butchered. What was to be done? Sir Garnet Wolseley advised the retention of Khartoum and the evacuation of all country to the south of it. Lord Cromer favoured the evacuation of the whole Sudan. The British Cabinet, and Gladstone not the least, were in a quandary, unwilling to dispatch an expedition to Khartoum, yet fearing the disgrace of abandoning the town. But in the winter months of 1884 a ray of light appeared.

There was then in England a certain remarkable individual of the name of Charles George Gordon. Half religious eccentric, half military genius, Gordon had led a life of strange adventure in distant continents. He had commanded a native army for the Chinese Government, receiving the title of "General" for his pains. He had explored the religious sites of Palestine; and, above all, for six years he had governed single-handed the Khedive's province of the south Sudan. Here was just the man for the new trouble with the Mahdi. His knowledge of the native was unequalled; the magic influence he wielded in the East was positively uncanny; and if anyone could work the miracle of setting things to right, then it was he. The desperate Liberal Cabinet clutched at the straw; and the long and short of it was that Gordon was sent out in the early months of spring to accomplish the evacuation of Khartoum. Those were his instructions; but they were not instructions which appealed to Gordon's mind. To him evacuation appeared a double error, a sad disaster for the Sudanese themselves and a blot on British fame. Once arrived within the town (which was not as yet beleaguered), he reported that the town could quite easily be held, and telegraphed to Lord Cromer that he was out "to smash the Mahdi." The peaceful governor of Egypt was at this profoundly shocked, and from that time forward he had but one idea, to get this troublesome fire-eater away out of Khartoum before it was too late. It was easier said than done. Not merely did the man in question refuse point-blank to come, but Khartoum had in the interval been laid under close siege, and an expedition would clearly now be needed to assist the withdrawal of the garrison. Mr. Gladstone, however, with his mind firmly set on his ideals, refused to see the necessity for military measures. "These people," he said, "are struggling to be free"; and it was not for a Liberal Government to intervene against an infant nationality. But the Liberal Government's views were not the views of England, which watched all these events with grave concern.

The plight of Gordon was daily growing desperate; the Mahdi's army was pressing Khartoum hard; by the end of April the very wires were cut. Thus left in the dark, the public's anxiety increased. In May a fund was started for sending a relief to Khartoum; and there

was a huge meeting of protest in Hyde Park. At length Lord Hartington, the War Minister, threatened to resign unless help were sent to Gordon; and Gladstone, fighting to the last against a policy he loathed, was finally compelled to yield. On 26 August Wolseley received orders to set sail; on 9 September he landed in Egypt; and a British force ten thousand strong was prepared for the march south. Meanwhile Gordon was sitting on the roof of the palace at Khartoum scanning the horizon through a telescope. In September he sent some steamers down the Nile with a few white residents aboard; but he himself stuck loyally to his post, stipulating merely that the relief force should be quick. On 10 December there remained but a fortnight's provisions in the town; and of the arrival of the relief there was no sign. Gordon occupied his leisure in keeping a crazy sort of diary and in writing farewell letters home. With the new year a rumour came to the now starving garrison that the British army was not far away. On the 28th of January that army arrived within sight of the town; but the town itself was in the Mahdi's hands and Gordon dead. . . . Mr. Gladstone lived down, as best he could, the odium of this tragic episode and ordered the evacuation of the whole Sudan. For the next twelve years the country was given up to anarchy. Then in 1896 Lord Kitchener marched south, in 1898 defeated the Mahdi at Omdurman, and thus at a blow restored the British credit and the country's peace. But for this no thanks were due to Mr. Gladstone or his Liberal principles; for by then other views prevailed.

"If a boy at Eton," Gordon wrote during the siege, "had behaved as the British Government has done, I *think* he would be kicked; and I am *sure* he would deserve it." Egypt had indeed showed Gladstone at his worst; and the disaster made him more unpopular than ever with upper-class society; but it was over a country nearer home than the Sudan that he committed what in their eyes was his unforgivable sin. That country was Ireland.

Famine and Revolt in Ireland.—If we have said little about Ireland in the foregoing pages, it is not because these years had for her been uneventful or because she had figured little in the thoughts of Englishmen. On the contrary, she had been a thorn in the side of every Government, Conservative or Liberal, since the day in 1800 when the ill-fated "Union" had been accomplished by the younger Pitt. From that mistaken policy sprang a century and more of misery and unrest. Agitation never for one moment ceased; and the sole remedy which the British Government provided was one which merely served to aggravate the malady—repression. Yet British Governments were not the only enemy to Ireland's peace. To the discontent which human selfishness began, Nature set the finishing touch; and the real outstanding landmark of the century was the famine of 1847. That year, as we have seen, the potato crop failed utterly, and the peasants, wholly dependent upon this one precarious root, were doomed. Hundreds of

thousands died. In some districts corpses littered the roadways. Nothing which human stomachs could conceivably digest was left untouched; and women trooped in hundreds to the farms to receive their repulsive dole of bullock's blood. What public or private charity could do was done. Soup-kitchens were provided, "relief works" set on foot. At one time three million persons were supported on rations from the Government; but these were wholly inadequate to meet their need; and even the survivors came out from the ordeal mere feeble shadows of their former selves. The famine left the land completely ruined, the people disconsolate and soured. Though England had shown at the crisis an unwonted generosity, she got small thanks; and Ireland's traditional hatred of the tyrant country was yet further embittered by this ghastly memory. So the struggle for freedom continued unabated; and in 1848—the year of revolutions—the feud came once more to a head. Daniel O'Connell's restraining hand was gone. He had never recovered influence after his imprisonment by Peel; and the "Young Ireland" party which had refused his leadership now took their orders from less balanced minds. A group of youthful journalists and poets gathered round a man named Smith O'Brien; and in 1848, seeing Europe in an uproar, they rushed into mad revolt. It was a brief and ludicrous fiasco. A few foolish peasants joined them; and at Ballingarry an attack was made on a contingent of police. There was an inglorious scramble in a cottage garden, and within ten minutes the "Battle of Widow McCormack's Cabbage Patch" was over. O'Brien was arrested, sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered in the good old style, but eventually transported to Australia. The "Young Ireland" movement went out; and the torch of liberty was now to be carried on by other less worthy, but not less reckless hands.

Fenianism and Gladstone's Remedies.—One result of the great famine had been a wholesale emigration to America. Within a few years the prospect of better things across the water had tempted nearly a million persons to leave home; and little by little the population of the island dwindled until at the end of the century it stood at barely a half of what it was at the beginning. The emigrants, however, when they reached the United States did not forget the country of their birth nor her grievance against England; and with their stalwart backing a new and dangerous conspiracy was set on foot. The "Fenians," as they called themselves, were not men to stick at violence; and during the sixties a regular campaign of futile outrage was begun. In the United States a desperate band, some thousand strong, essayed the wild project of invading Canada. They were ignominiously repulsed. At Chester the conspirators undertook to raid the Castle and seize possession of its military stores; but the stratagem missed fire. At Clerkenwell jail, where some Fenians were confined, a barrel of gunpowder was placed under the walls; but the explosion, while wounding several score of innocent civilians, did little damage to the jail itself. At

Manchester the Fenians attacked a prison-van and killed a police officer inside. Three who were taken in the act were hanged, and won for themselves the name of "martyrs" to the cause.

Nor was Ireland herself tranquil. There a truceless war had been declared against the hated landlord class; and all through the remainder of the century the tale of crime ran on. "Moonlighters" fired fatal shots through windows at the dead of night. Cattle were maimed or spirited mysteriously away; and men who incurred the displeasure of the "Leaguers" were "boycotted" by all the neighbourhood. Such tactics made little real impression upon England. The public felt uneasy; but they would not yield to threats. So the old misunderstanding gradually hardened into an obstinate, uncompromising hate; and the Irish were regarded as an unmanageable race who could appreciate no argument but force. "England," said "The Times," "has Ireland at her mercy, and can now deal with her just as she pleases." Such was the attitude which generally prevailed. But there was another view. One great and penetrating intellect was striving to find a solution of this insoluble problem. Gladstone at any rate was not content to look on, while Ireland perished, without an effort to arrest the slow decay. He tried honestly to diagnose the cause of her distresses; and, like a skilful doctor, sought the remedy by seeking to understand the true roots of the disease. His approach to the problem was tentative and cautious. When he first took office as Prime Minister in 1868, the Fenian scare was at its height. Murder and crime were rampant; and he was compelled ere long to introduce a stern measure of repression, forbidding the use of fire-arms in the more dangerous districts, and empowering the police to make search in private houses or even arrest suspicious persons upon sight. But this was not for Gladstone, as it had been for other statesmen, the one and only antidote to Irish violence; and meanwhile he was endeavouring by constructive legislation to remove the underlying grievances which prompted it. The only tragedy of his attempt was that it failed just when success appeared to be in sight.

Absentee Landlords.—Ireland's troubles were in the main threefold; and Disraeli's famous summary expressed them well—"a starving people, an alien Church, and an absentee aristocracy." The first at any rate was painfully obvious; yet starvation was not a state of things which need have been. The country itself is naturally productive; and all that was required to turn poverty to plenty was to restore the Irish people to a settled frame of mind and to inspire them with fresh confidence and hope. It was therefore with the two remaining troubles that Gladstone undertook first to deal. The "alien Church" was a long-standing grievance. For, although the vast majority of Irishmen were Catholics, the official creed was still the Protestant—the creed of the small minority of Scottish and English settlers who in the course of previous centuries had been settled on the land. This Protestant supremacy was bitterly resented, and for many years it had caused deep unrest. O'Connell in his time had fought a sturdy battle

to relieve his countrymen of the burden of tithe-payment. In 1838 his protests had been successful; and the responsibility of supporting the official Church's clergy had rightfully been shifted from the Catholic peasants, and placed thenceforth entirely on the landlord class who in the main were Protestants. Nevertheless the official Church remained—an object of bitter hatred to nine Irishmen in ten and regarded with spiteful jealousy by the Roman Catholic priests. These were perpetually at feud against their rival; and they desired not merely to see it disestablished, but also (since it drew large revenues from Ireland) disendowed. The justice of such claims was manifest to Gladstone, who himself was a member of the High Church party and so the less unfriendly to the Catholic point of view; and at the opening of his Ministry in 1869 he determined to concede them. The Protestant Church in Ireland he severed altogether from its official connection with the State; and its endowments for the most part he took away from it, making them over to the use of schools and colleges or else to institutions of a charitable sort. Yet, if he fancied thus easily to pacify the Irish, he was very much mistaken. The Catholic priests rewarded the concession by redoubling their agitations and intrigues; and the immediate benefits of Mr. Gladstone's statesmanship were lost to sight in the fresh storms which now arose.

Far more serious than the religious grievance was the interminable feud about the land. That the majority of the natives had been deprived long since of all rights of ownership was bad enough; but since the famine of 1847 a new trouble had emerged. The landlords of earlier days had mostly settled down, though not invariably, to be good Irishmen and to treat their tenants with neighbourly regard. In the disastrous year, however, thousands and thousands of such landowners were ruined and forced to sell their land. The purchasers were men of a very different stamp. They did not buy to settle on the property, but solely to make money on the rents. For the most part they managed their estates from England; and, as was only natural, the tenants got no mercy from such "absentees." They were now asked extortionate figures for their land. On failure to pay rent they were ruthlessly evicted; and for improvements they had made upon the farms and buildings, no compensation whatever was allowed them. No wonder, therefore, that the landlords were unpopular or that their victims not infrequently took criminal revenge. In 1870 Mr. Gladstone introduced a Bill to regulate such matters. It compelled the landlord to deal fairly with his tenants, to compensate them properly for improvements they had made, and to refrain from unjustifiable eviction. Yet, beneficent as the measure was, it did not go far enough. Landlords will still be landlords upon whatever terms; and greed will always find a way to circumvent the law. No remedy could be final which stopped short of re-establishing the native Irish as *owners* of their land; and in this the Bill of 1870 did not succeed. It is true that one clause held out to tenant farmers some prospect of purchasing their farms.

But nothing came of it; for the fact is that Mr. Gladstone had done little more than tinker with the problem; and, although in 1881 he produced a further law fixing the tenants' rents at a fair price and giving them far greater security of tenure, he never really solved it. Ireland meanwhile was growing more unrestful; for, her appetite once whetted by such unforeseen concessions, she straightway demanded more; and there was now but one concession which would permanently satisfy her need.

Parnell and Home Rule.—The repeal of the Act of Union and the revival at Dublin of a Home Rule Parliament remained throughout these various agitations the true goal of Ireland's hope. One weapon, too, she still possessed, which hitherto she had strangely failed to use. She sent her representatives to Westminster; and the hundred Irish members in the House of Commons were numerous enough to make their presence felt; yet since O'Connell's day at any rate they had accomplished next to nothing. Irish statesmanship seemed a thing of the past. In 1875, however a new force appeared among them—the personality of Charles Stewart Parnell. Parnell was no Celtic firebrand of Daniel O'Connell's stamp, but the dour, level-headed son of an Irish Protestant, with a genius for organization and the command of men. He was determined to extort from England the concession of Home Rule, but he meant to win his object, as alone he realized it could be won, by constitutional and legal methods. At times, indeed, he sailed very near the wind and laid himself open to the charge of fomenting crime. The "Land League" which he started in 1879 was nothing short of a national conspiracy against one class. It aimed at making the landlords' life impossible; and the idea was one to which the Irish warmed afresh; from peaceful "boycott" it was an easy step to outrage, and before long the movement spread beyond the leader's power to check it. A strong "Coercion Act" was passed to stamp out violence; and Parnell himself was actually arrested and lodged for a period in Kilmainham jail. Pledged to exert his influence in restoring peace and order, he was presently released; but within a week a terrible outrage had occurred which gave his cause an unforeseen set-back.

In the May of 1882 Lord Frederick Cavendish, the new Chief Secretary, had just arrived in Dublin; he and his Under Secretary, a Mr. Burke, were strolling one evening across Phoenix Park when they were brutally set upon and murdered. This irresponsible act of a small gang of conspirators startled and horrified the world. British fury rose to boiling-point, and all chance of reasonable settlement seemed lost. Yet Parnell weathered the storm. Some years later an attempt was made to prove his acquiescence in the crime. The "Times" published a facsimile copy of a letter in his hand, declaring that "Burke had got no more than his deserts." The letter proved, however, to be an audacious forgery, the work of an ex-Fenian of the name of Pigott, who wrote a full confession of his guilt, fled to the Continent, and committed suicide. Thus Parnell's character was satisfactorily cleared; and

meanwhile his popularity in Ireland had made enormous strides. True to the Kilmainham pledge, he had discountenanced all crime and was fighting his battle, in the proper constitutional manner, across the floor of Parliament. There his party of Home Rulers soon made its presence felt. They obstructed all such business as did not refer to Ireland. By every familiar trick of Parliamentary stratagem, they contrived to make themselves a thorough nuisance; and in 1885 their vote was largely instrumental in the overthrow of Gladstone. A General Election followed; and Parnell's party came back to Westminster more numerous and more bellicose than ever. But Mr. Gladstone, too, very soon came back to power, and, what was more essential, he came back *converted*. In 1886 he introduced for the first time a Bill for the granting of Home Rule to Ireland.

Long and loud were the denunciations with which this famous measure was received. His enemies declared that Mr. Gladstone was simply yielding to intimidation. Lust for power, they said, was the Liberal leader's weakness; and, as the Liberal Ministry was dependent for its tenure on the support of Irish votes, this was a naked subterfuge to maintain itself in office. Such criticisms were more spiteful than well founded. Mr. Gladstone's conversion was not the matter of a moment. For many years he had pondered in his secret heart upon this bold solution of the Irish problem; nor could mere love of power have driven him at the age of seventy-seven to stake his whole reputation on such a venture. It was a brave plunge; but it was fatal. For, contrary to his hopes, it split his party. Ninety-three Liberals—the very flower of his adherents—joined the ranks of the “Unionist” opposition pledged to support the “Union” at all costs. As a result of their secession the Bill itself was thrown out in the House of Commons by a margin of thirty votes; and, when Gladstone once again appealed for the country's verdict at a new election, the answer was decisive. The Unionists came in with an immense majority; and for twenty years the Liberal Party was to all intents and purposes extinguished.

Such was the tragic end of Parnell's great crusade. He had failed to convince England, and even at home he was soon to lose his influence. His fall was due to an injudicious lapse from moral rectitude. In 1890 he was accused of making love to the wife of one Captain O'Shea; a divorce suit being brought, he made no effort to defend it; and the disgrace of this disclosure broke the spell of his authority. He struggled on; but died in 1891 a discredited and disappointed man. Gladstone meanwhile had not abandoned hope. In the year after Parnell's death he regained power for a brief period, and returned to the attack. Once more he was dependent upon the Irish vote, and once more he attempted to pass a Home Rule Bill. He actually succeeded in pushing it through the Commons; but it met with overwhelming resistance in the House of Lords, where it was finally defeated by four hundred votes. Gladstone retired, to die some five years later full of vigour to the last. His astonishing career had ended, so it seemed, in an astonishing mis-

judgment of the British character. Yet time has proved that England and not he was in the wrong. How much of misery and strife and rancour might then have been avoided by a timely acceptance of his policy, England now knows to her bitter cost. But England's choice was made. Home Rule for the while was dead; and henceforward whatever policy she might pursue towards Ireland, it was firmly based on the retention of the Union. In one point, however, the "Unionist" Government succeeded where even Gladstone failed. After the first Home Rule Bill and the Liberal overthrow Mr. Balfour became Chief Secretary for Ireland; and in that capacity he brought in a useful measure for enabling the Irish to buy back their land. Loans of State money, to be paid off by easy stages, were advanced to native tenants for the purchase of their farms. Thus in many districts the old grievance was wiped out; and the alien landlord began to disappear. Almost despite itself the country became prosperous. Yet the appearance of tranquillity was deceptive. The iron had entered too deep into her soul, and Ireland did not forget. The spirit of nationality, which had survived a century of starvation and misrule, was not to be effaced by a few short years of plenty and good government. The cry for freedom was to rise again; and Mr. Gladstone, for all the scorn and obloquy which greeted him, had recognized a side of Irish character to which his critics had been blind.

Gladstone's Failure.—The Liberal policy for Ireland had miscarried. But Liberalism itself survived the shock; and, so long as men at large retain their vision of a better future and a freer state, it will continue to survive. Trusting to the broad common sense of the community, and believing that men know better how to order their own lives than any external authority can order them, the Liberal pins his faith upon the democracy and in the pursuit of his ideal he is prepared to take big risks. Often he is impatient at seeing the world lag so far behind his hope; and often too, like Mr. Gladstone, he is prone to under-estimate the weakness and futility of man. So, if he too readily imagines that backward peoples, like the Egyptians or the Bulgars, are ripe for the institutions of self-government, it is because he prefers to look at the better side of human character, and attributes to others, who do not in fact possess them, the same ideals as he himself pursues.

Idealism, however, is not a principle much recognized in politics; and one reason why Mr. Gladstone was so much detested was because he too frequently adopted a superior moral tone. Men dislike an opponent who carries his conscience into politics; and the misfortune was that Mr. Gladstone's conscience was no ordinary one. It did not always behave in a straightforward or consistent fashion. It forbade him to make war upon the helpless Sudanese; yet it equally allowed a helpless Englishman to perish without succour in Khartoum. Could it be—men wondered—that this mysterious conscience was simply self-interest under a thin disguise? The Irish business confirmed their worst

suspicious. Throughout the previous years Gladstone had never questioned the retention of the Union. He had shown as firm a hand as any statesman in suppressing the wild violence of the Irish. Then came the day when he found himself for once at the mercy of the Parnellite Home Rulers—immediately he saw fit to change his mind and his conscience told him to set Ireland free. It was only natural that his enemies felt doubts about the honesty of Mr. Gladstone's motives, and that they set down his assumption of high moral tone to a calculated cunning and hypocrisy. Yet, perhaps, what added sting to the hatred which they felt for him was something still more subtle—was there a consciousness deep down in their own hearts that Mr. Gladstone after all was in the right?

CHAPTER XIV

EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM

I

Rival Views of Empire.—During all this clash and interplay of party politics at Westminster, and while men at home were as eagerly debating the effects of some new measure or the chances of a Ministry's survival as though upon such issues hung the country's very fate, Englishmen were meantime busy in distant continents and islands transforming and reshaping the destiny of the world. For the work of the previous century had not been final; and England's Empire during these years had grown apace, until now there was scarcely a stretch of mainland or an ocean archipelago which it had not somewhere touched. Hitherto the growth had been strangely unobtrusive. It was seldom talked of; it had made little impression on the minds of the bulk of men. But now the time had come when its existence could no longer be ignored, and when the nation's decision must once and for all be taken concerning the responsibilities and meaning of this tremendous trust. Two views, in fact, prevailed about the future of the Colonies. On the one hand many saw in their possession no more than a passing phase. They believed that, as the great dependencies in North America had fallen from England, so in due course, the remainder of her Colonies would some day fall away. Using the argument of metaphor, they would liken them to fruit which, when it comes to ripeness, drops from the mother tree, or to children who, grown to manhood, cast off the bonds of parental discipline and establish an independent household of their own. To this view the later Liberal school in politics inclined. Not merely, as we have seen, did Gladstone shrink from making fresh annexations overseas; but he and his party were averse no less to any interference in the existing Colonies' affairs. The individual freedom, which Whig doctrine preached at home, they wished to extend

equally to the countries England had conquered or absorbed. Empires to them meant little beyond opportunities of trade; and in trade itself it was an axiom of their policy that either party should so far as possible be free. According, therefore, to the Liberal way of thinking it would be injudicious and impolitic to maintain England's connection with the Colonies for any longer than the Colonies themselves desired. But there was another view. Disraeli had taught the Conservatives a lesson which was to bear abundant fruit in after years. He showed that Empire was a source of strength, not weakness; and that, while allowing the Colonies a large measure of self-government, England should strive to bind them by ties of common sentiment and interest more closely to herself. Empire, in short, was not a thing to be handled with a shamefaced timidity. It was a proud and valuable heritage which might, if rightly used, promote at once the material prosperity of England and the spread of British political ideals through the world. Thus taught, Englishmen came to take a conscious pride in Empire. They boasted of the circle of far-flung dominions upon which in his daily travel the sun now never set. They rejoiced to variegate their maps with bright red markings, as a visible reminder of England's great possessions. Imperialism, in fact, became a fashionable enthusiasm. Despite British commercial instincts they are a sentimental race; and the idea of a lasting union with their colonial cousins served well to reinforce the growing sense of the more solid and tangible advantages accruing from their trade.

Causes of Expansion.—The Imperial spirit then was the fruit and not the cause of a century's Empire-building; and, if England awakened slowly to the importance of her overseas possessions, she had also been no less casual and haphazard in her method of acquiring them. At the beginning of the century the world had lain before her. Serious rivals she had none. Spain, Portugal, and Holland had long since dropped out of the race. France after a hundred years of fighting had been finally defeated. Germany had still to become a nation; and her commercial expansion was not destined to begin until near the century's close. England had, therefore, a clear field. Yet the British Government was strangely slow to seize the obvious chance. Whatever her foreign critics may assert, it displayed no indecent hurry to rush in and hoist the Union Jack in every vacant corner of the world. On the contrary, it showed a positive disinclination for adding new responsibilities to old. Sometimes it was wilfully remiss in taking official action; sometimes annexations which had already been achieved by men upon the spot were actually countermanded by the authorities at home.

Her machinery, too, for dealing with colonial government was tardily developed; during the first half of the century the Secretary for War had charge of all such business, and it was not until the eve of the Crimea that an independent office for the Colonies was formed. All this perhaps was natural. The attention of her Ministers was mainly riveted on European politics. They paid but little heed to the larger

world without; and such progress as she made—unofficial or official—was generally the handiwork of individual pioneers. Commercial enterprise was perhaps the chief inducement. Merchants planted posts where opportunity offered; and trade, so far from “following the flag,” was more often in advance of it. But there was another motive. In the less thickly peopled and more temperate countries of North America, Australia, and South Africa, England now found a useful outlet for her surplus manhood. The population of the British Isles was multiplied at least threefold during the progress of the century; and, under the stern conditions of industrial competition which prevailed, many were tempted to exchange their British homes for the more alluring prospect of colonial life. So, while in tropical and equatorial regions the traders were pushing British interests in pursuit of wealth, the slow stream of emigration was peopling fertile hinterlands elsewhere with a sturdy race of Anglo-Saxon farmers. With these two processes of overseas expansion we must now deal; and we will look first at trade.

The vigour and extent of British commercial enterprise we have long since emphasized in the course of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; nor need we repeat the obvious truth that England's greatness had been largely built upon the wealth thus won. Towards the end, however, of the eighteenth century her mercantile activities had received a fresh and vital stimulus. The Industrial Revolution, which multiplied production by the aid of the machine, had proportionately multiplied the volume of British exports. All kinds of manufactured goods were sent circling through the world; and they found a ready market among coloured peoples no less than among whites. Cotton fabrics, guns and knives, not to speak of metal trinkets and the rest, were eagerly accepted by delighted natives, who in return gave England the peculiar products of their own hot and fertile lands. They provided her with many raw materials for her manufacture, oils for example, or, in the later stages, rubber. They sent her fruits and foods and spices such as England cannot grow; and the result has been to change the very diet of her people, who soon came to prefer tea and coffee at their breakfast in the place of ale or beer, while the abundant importation of cheap sugar has enormously increased the popularity of jam. During the nineteenth century such trade has steadily developed; and the rapid improvement of sea-communications due to the invention of the steamship has naturally helped much. Other causes, however, have been at work and have stimulated enterprise in fresh directions.

At the beginning of the century, the West Indies were even more than India proper the most fertile source of wealth. But their productiveness depended very largely on slave labour; and the liberation of the negroes in the thirties struck the West Indian planters a cruel blow. The palmy days they had enjoyed during the previous century were ended; and more and more merchants came to seek their fortune, not so much beyond the Atlantic as in the East. There, at the close of the Napoleonic wars, England held not merely India, but, as the spoils

of victory, Mauritius and Ceylon. Golden prospects were thus opened out; and the tide of trade accordingly turned eastwards. It was not, however, till more than half-way through the century that its course was simplified by a scheme of brilliant enterprise and foresight. In 1869 the canal was completed through the Suez Isthmus. It was the work of Frenchmen, not of Englishmen; but its benefits were England's. Disraeli's timely purchase of the Khedive's shares gave her a controlling interest in the great canal. Already in 1839 by a fine stroke of fortune she had possessed herself of Aden; and thus to the great advantage of her traders she held the keys of the Red Sea. The result was that England was not merely able to exploit in a full measure the enormous resources she already owned in India; she proceeded also to push farther afield.

The East and Africa.—In the Far East three main areas, as yet but little touched, awaited the enterprise of England's merchants—the Malay Peninsula, the Coast of China, and the Pacific Isles. In the first she already had a foothold. At Penang in 1800 and at Singapore nineteen years later settlements had been founded under the British flag. In the early seventies, however, England's previous holdings were considerably extended. She annexed some adjacent islands, took control of the native mainland states, and not long after added North Borneo to the rest. Sarawak, the independent "conquest" of an adventurous Englishman, who had won single-handed a kingdom for himself and ruled under the resounding title-name of "Rajah" Brooke, was likewise made a protectorate of the Crown. Nor was it long before the effects of orderly government were felt. The restless native princes quieted down; and the whole important group of the Malay settlements enjoyed an unparalleled prosperity. Away to the north, meanwhile, Englishmen had begun to tap the incalculable wealth which lay stored in stagnant China. Since the seventeenth century the East India Company had enjoyed the special privilege of trading with Canton. In 1833 this monopoly was ended, with the result that trade increased. The Chinese, however, resented the growing intrusion of the foreigner, and especially the importation of the noxious opium drug. Six years later the native High Commissioner ordered the destruction of the English opium stores. War followed—the most unjust in history, so Mr. Gladstone said—and the upshot was that the Chinese climbed down, threw open their five chief ports to European shipping, and ceded to England the valuable island of Hong-Kong.

Fresh trouble arose twenty years later. Peking was entered and the Summer Palace sacked. With that the resistance of the natives to commercial penetration began slowly to break down. Wei-hai-wei, which England acquired in the last years of the century, gave her a northern port scarcely less useful than Hong-Kong itself; and by degrees the influence of European manners has tempered the habitual aloofness of the conservative Chinese. It remains to mention briefly the Pacific Isles. Here, too, as elsewhere, traders had long since found a way;

and missionaries followed. The islanders were bullied by rapacious settlers, perplexed and driven to faction by the zeal of conflicting sects.

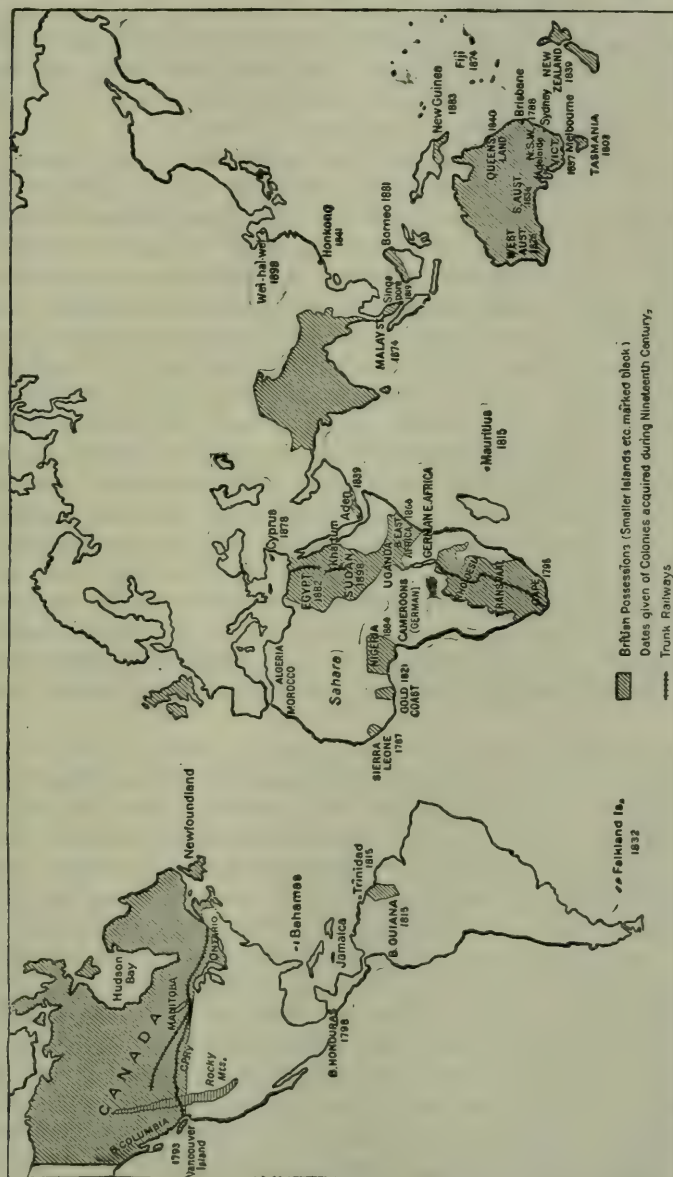


Fig. 53.—THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1900.

In 1872 Bishop Patteson was murdered by a tribe of outraged natives; and then at last, though much against its will, the British Government was forced to intervene. The Fiji group of islands was brought

within the Empire. Their value to England lay in the sugar cane and other rarer products of a luxuriant climate; and this flanking settlement in the extremest east completed, as it were, her girdle round the world. The Falkland Islands off the Strait of Magellan—secured, as it so happened, in 1833—provided British ships with a convenient port of call in South America; and thus the great chain of Empire was knit up in a connection which was less the result of calculated policy than of the Englishman's good luck.

One continent remains of which in this history little mention has been made. The discovery of Africa may be said to have been the work of the nineteenth century. Of its southern regions we shall speak anon, falling as they do among the "emigration" areas, but the tropical centre, of a widely different climate, has offered opportunities for trade much more on eastern lines. On the western side England's holdings have never been much more than coastal stations to which produce can be transported from the hinterland—Sierra Leone—founded just before the beginning of the century as a philanthropic settlement for liberated slaves—became a Crown Colony a few years later. The Gold Coast was soon added; and the African company of merchants which had hitherto administered it, deprived of their monopoly. A similar company which held rights in South Nigeria was likewise dispossessed just before the century's close; and, though more than once they had given England serious trouble, the Ashanti were forced eventually to bow the neck. This string of Colonies affords rich returns to merchants; and the natives, who once served as material for the Slave Trade, are not unwilling to work for trifling pay; but the unwholesome climate, breeding fevers and mosquitoes, sets an inevitable limit to the Colony's success.

The hinterland, meanwhile, until then an unknown country, had been gradually unveiled. David Livingstone in the mid-year of the century had traversed the continent from coast to coast. Stanley and others continued with the work, penetrating swamps and trackless jungles, hunting the big game, and discovering strange tribes of backward peoples. The chief impetus, however, to the opening up of Central Africa came from the eastern coast. Here also chartered companies were busy many years before the Home Government stepped in; and not till England was faced with German competition did she grasp the necessity for annexation. Then in 1888 and 1890 she staked out her claim; and Uganda, British East Africa, and Zanzibar became Protectorates of the Crown. The subsequent penetration of the South Sudan linked up these new possessions with the north; while the expansion through the Transvaal to Rhodesia made contact equally with British provinces in the south. Other nations had not been idle. The Germans, Belgians, French and Portuguese each claimed their slice of Africa. But none of their possessions was so aptly placed as England's. For here too good fortune and keen enterprise had favoured her. Her scattered settlements were so disposed that she could form of them one

long continuous chain; and the project was soon fostered of constructing lines of railway which should link them up from Cairo to the Cape. But the history of this and other grandiose schemes of African development belongs rather to the second division of our subject—the great self-governing Dominions which England's emigrants have filled.

Canada.—We will begin with Canada. When the revolted colonies of New England seceded from the Empire in the reign of George III, England was fortunate in the fact that Canada as yet was scarcely peopled. With the handful of French settlers so recently defeated in the Seven Years' War she was not likely to encounter serious trouble. Their militia indeed refused to take up arms for the defence of their own frontier; but they made no open rising and British regiments repelled the secessionists' attack. So Canada was left to England; and into it, when the war was over, passed a stream of loyal colonials who preferred the rule of England to the newly formed Republic of the United States. At first the influx came from the United States alone, and went chiefly to the wooded districts round Lake Ontario, which were known as Upper Canada. The population, though increasing, was still scanty when in 1812 the United States took umbrage at the maritime blockade England had imposed on Europe's commerce and rushed into war with her. For the moment Canada seemed doomed, threatened as she was by the invasion of overwhelming numbers; but the French and British residents showed a united front, and after three years' fighting the Americans had made no impression on the frontier. With the declaration of peace in 1815, the Colony's history entered a new phase. Emigrants now began to flock from home. The long years of starvation and low wages which followed Waterloo sent Englishmen in thousands to people the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. The climate, though severe in winter season, is admirably suited to the Anglo-Saxon. Hard work was necessary to clear the trees and scrub; but in the virgin soil once opened heavy crops could soon be raised; and land at a nominal price was available for every comer. So, as fresh contingents of immigrants came over, the area of settlement spread fast. In the milder climate of southeastern districts fruit-farms have sprung up. The inexhaustible forests which surround the whole Lake country have given occupation to large hosts of lumber-men. Hunters have pushed northwards for the furs of animals; and the more recent discovery of gold at Klondyke has tempted many into the far northwest. Wheat, however, remains the staple product of the colony; and with the slow, laborious process of land-clearing the area of cultivation has spread beyond the Lakes across the open prairie to the foot of the great barrier of the Rocky Mountain range. Thus from one side to the other of the whole vast continent there now runs a narrow belt—measuring at most two hundred miles in breadth—of more or less developed and populated country. Beyond the Rockies lie the two remote dependents, which since 1871 have formed a part of the Dominion proper—British Columbia and Vancouver Island. These two

in the first instance were discovered from the Pacific side. Cook visited the island in the eighteenth century; and one Captain Vancouver, who explored it shortly after, had given it his name. It was, however, a Canadian trader who first came across the mountains and tapped the resources of these regions. The hinterland of both the mainland and the island is wild and thickly wooded; but a narrow coastal strip provides a climate exceptionally mild and well suited to fruit growing. Its commerce has received an enormous stimulus from the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which climbs the Rockies and thus links the farthest West with the ports of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic trade routes. Thanks to this wise development of her communications, the prosperity of Canada makes rapid strides; and for few countries in the world can we predict a more brilliant future.

Canadian Politics.—It was unlikely and unnatural that the administration of this great Dominion should long remain in the same dependence upon England as the majority of the Colonies of which we spoke above. Those in the main are governed directly by agents of the Crown; and it will be long before their native populations can possibly be ripe for democratic institutions. In Canada, however, the presence of an exclusively white population raised a very different problem. The stern conditions of their strenuous life has produced an extremely vigorous, self-reliant race of men, closely akin in many ways to their immediate neighbours of the States. Had England thought fit to treat them in the same high-handed manner as she treated the citizens of New England, the same result would assuredly have followed, and Canada been lost to her. But England had learnt her lesson; and little by little she has extended to her sons the rights and privileges of genuine self-government.

In 1791 an Act was passed in the Home Parliament, which, while splitting the Colony into two separate States of Upper and Lower Canada, gave each a Constitution of the British type. There was to be an Upper House, appointed for life by the British Crown, and a Lower House of elected representatives; while the Governor, sent out from England, performed, as it were, the functions of the King. In point of fact, however, the Governor's authority was well-nigh paramount; the executive power, for which he was responsible to the Home Government alone, lay entirely in his hands; and the two assemblies could do little more than talk. Almost from the start the scheme worked badly. In Upper Canada the Governor's predominance, though backed by the approval of the more conservative first-comers, was greatly resented by the newly arrived immigrants. In Lower Canada the strong French element was even more blatant in its demands for pure democracy. By 1837 the trouble came to a head; and in both provinces the malcontents took arms. They were easily suppressed; and the governor sent out from England to set things right again was happily a statesman of wide and liberal views—Lord Durham. His solution of the problem was to merge the two separate provinces in one. This was

done; and in 1842 a Constitution, consisting as before of two legislative houses, was established. Fuller powers were soon extended to this Union Parliament. In 1847, Lord Durham's successor and son-in-law, Lord Elgin, began the practice of choosing the Executive, as the British Cabinet is chosen, from the party preponderating in the Lower House. Thus Canada became in a true sense self-governing. The demands of the British colonists were satisfied. The French, though still aggressive, slowly absorbed the saner atmosphere of British common-sense; and the political life of the Dominion assumed a healthier tone. It remained to draw into the Union the other dependencies which lay around. This move was hastened by the alarm aroused first by the object lesson of the American Civil War, and then by the Fenian raids which followed shortly after. Sir John Macdonald, a shrewd Canadian statesman, who conceived this great ideal, met with much opposition; but he was eventually successful in achieving it. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick first joined the Federation; then Manitoba was purchased from the Trading Company of Hudson Bay. British Columbia, though parted from the rest by the Rockies and the prairie, threw in her lot with them in 1871. Only Newfoundland, now herself self-governing, has preferred to remain aloof. Thus Canada led the way in developing a system of Colonial independence, which has served in reality to bind her yet more closely in a voluntary allegiance to the mother country. The generosity of British statesmen, who allowed the step, has been abundantly repaid; and their wise concessions marked, as we now see, a critical turning-point in the history of the Empire's evolution.

Australia and New Zealand.—Australia's story has not been equally eventful. By reason of her late development and natural isolation she has been far more self-contained and less subject to external influences; but her progress has not on that account been less interesting; for her policy, unfettered by the traditions of a past, has led to bolder experiments perhaps in the realm of pure democracy than any other English-speaking country has attempted. Australia's start was bad. First sighted by a Spaniard soon after 1600, her coasts had not been methodically explored until the voyage of Captain Cook in 1770. Cook's primary object had been scientific observation; and, carrying as he did a botanical expert on his staff, one spot on the East coast which he had visited was nicknamed "Botany Bay." Hither in 1788 came the first permanent white settlers on the continent; and they were convicts, transported to this unknown wilderness of the Pacific seas, because, since the revolt of the New England colonies, they could no longer be safely sent to North America. Let us not, however, mistake the character of these men. They were not of necessity all deep-dyed criminals. The Penal Code was at that time very harsh; and many were transported for trifling misdemeanours, in some cases merely political in character. This notwithstanding, a sort of slur was cast upon the early settlements these exiled folk inhabited. Sydney, near Botany Bay, was the first; and it formed the nucleus of New South

Wales. Others were planted in Tasmania and in the neighbourhood of Brisbane, north of Sydney. The transportation system continued far into the nineteenth century, and was not finally abandoned till the sixties.

Meanwhile, however, more reputable immigrants had been arriving in large numbers. Gold, which was discovered in 1851, had brought out thousands of adventurers; and the extensive uplands suitable for grazing had made sheep-farming a most profitable business. New South Wales had formed the starting-point, and played, as it were, the rôle of mother-colony. Close on her southern border grew Victoria round its capital of Melbourne, which took its title from the young Queen's first Prime Minister, as the Colony itself was called after the Queen. Away to the north spread Queensland round its capital Brisbane. These two broke off during the fifties, and became henceforth separate States. Meanwhile a year or two before the Queen's accession the tide of immigration had found out other coasts. West and South Australia had been colonized, and shortly afterwards New Zealand had been invaded. The last two settlements were made under the auspices of a new school of British politicians. Gibbon Wakefield, a friend of the Lord Durham who had set Canada to rights, was by sympathy a Liberal; but, unlike many Liberals, he believed that Colonies, if generously treated, might remain the loyal adherents of the Crown. It was his enthusiasm which helped to launch both South Australia and New Zealand on their great careers. They were intended to be run as model Colonies; and, though at certain points the schemes broke down, they have kept true in the main issue to the ideals Wakefield held and have coloured the whole policy of the Australian Commonwealth. For democratic principles have here won a signal triumph. The Upper House of Representatives is even more representative of popular opinion than the Lower. Women have been granted the vote, long before it was given to their English cousins; and Labour Governments have successfully held office for considerable periods.

In New Zealand alone has the problem of a native population been seriously encountered. There the Maoris, unlike the low type aborigines of the mainland, are a fighting race, once cannibals; and they gave England much trouble in the forties and the sixties, when stubborn wars were fought. But their animosity has since been pacified; and there is no more striking testimony to the success of British methods than the inclusion of Maori chieftains at the present day in the New Zealand Parliament. For all that, there is no country in the world prouder than is New Zealand. She goes her own ways in the conscious certainty that she leads the van of progress; and when in 1900 the States of the main continent were joined together in the great Federation of the Australian Commonwealth,¹ she preferred to stand apart. The fact is that, as in

¹ Federation means that, while there are local Parliaments in each Province or State to deal with local matters, a common Parliament is formed of representatives from each to deal with matters of common policy.

Canada, the healthy outdoor life led here among the sheep farms and the goldfields has produced in all these lands a peculiarly hardy, independent stock. The Australians and New Zealanders carry their heads high and will take commands from no man. England has been wise, if indeed the choice were hers, to drive so spirited a team upon an easy rein.

South Africa and the Boers.—If Australia's problems have been simple and clearcut, very different have been the problems of South Africa; for two fresh elements there entered in, which served greatly to complicate the issue—first, the existence of a large native population, outnumbering the white men even now by six to one, and, second, the settlement previous to England's own of Dutch immigrants from Europe. Between these Dutchmen, the natives, and the English there has been a continuous three-cornered struggle. The blacks, however, once the white man came, were doomed sooner or later to fall beneath his yoke; and the real antagonism has lain, in fact, between the political ideals of the two races of white immigrants. The Dutchmen, backward, conservative, and grasping, have desired to exploit the natives to the full, robbing them of their liberty at the same time as their land and using them to all intents and purposes as slaves. British representatives, upon the other hand, have at least desired to give the natives justice; and, though England has gradually absorbed their territory, this policy has more often than not been forced upon her by the necessity of preserving them from the Dutchman's harder yoke. Thus the British advance from the Cape upwards has been faltering and—one may almost say—involuntary; and the vacillations of the Government at home, however honourable in their intention, have not infrequently proved disastrous in the result.

It was slightly more than half-way through the seventeenth century that the Dutch established their station at the Cape, using it mainly as a port of call for India. But, as time went on, the settlement increased, swelled simultaneously by fresh emigrants from Holland and by Huguenots from France. Then, during England's great French wars and when Holland itself became Napoleon's pawn, England seized the Cape; and in 1815 the terms of the peace treaty made it hers. The Dutch colonists, or Boers as we shall henceforth call them, became thus the subjects of the British Crown; England gave them such rights as her own colonists enjoyed; and, had they seen eye to eye with the British upon the native question, all would have been well; but they did not. They were horrified and indignant when in 1828 England extended civil rights to all natives residing within the British border. Their anger was increased when in 1833 England passed the famous law emancipating slaves; and, though the Boer slave-owners received some compensation for their loss, they could not understand, still less forgive, the philanthropy which caused it. The last straw came in 1834, when the annexation of some Kaffir country east of Cape Town, which had been effected by the local governor and which suited exactly the policy of the Boers, was countermanded by the Government in London.

Two years later, their deep resentment took an unexpected shape, which has changed the whole history of South Africa. For a large number, though not all, of these infuriated farmers made up their minds to quit. They packed their goods and chattels upon wagons, put in their wives and families along with them, said a last farewell to their old homes, cracked their whips, set the oxen in motion, and disappeared into the north. Across the Orange River some came to a halt and settled down; others pressed farther north across the Vaal. At such a distance from the Cape they fancied themselves free from British interference, and here at least hoped to have it their own way with the surrounding tribes. The "Great Trek," as it was called, raised up a thorny problem for the British Government. Even in their new and distant domicile England began by claiming these truants as subjects of the Crown. In the early fifties she reversed that policy, giving their freedom to the twin Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange River Free State, and only making a proviso that they should not enslave the natives. But a Boer's pledge is lightly given; and England was soon to find that his tactics had not changed. Bad tales came down of his high-handed methods, which greatly disturbed the conscience of British rulers, shrinking as they did from further annexation, yet feeling in part responsible for what went on.

Zulu and Boer Wars.—In 1868 England had to intervene between the Boers and the Basutos, with the result that Basutoland became a protectorate of her own. In 1876 she found the Boers once more making trouble with the Zulus; and, fearful of the consequences were this warlike tribe let loose upon white colonists, she decided that the dangerous farce must end. So the Transvaal Republic was annexed to the British Crown. But the step brought England no peace. For more than thirty years her settlers had been pushing up the eastern coastline and occupying the long district called Natal. This province now impinged upon the Zulu country; and, though hitherto their tribesmen had been friendly towards English people, they much resented England's new action in taking their other neighbours and old enemies, the Boers, under her own protection—for that is how the annexation had appeared to them. In any case, after a year or two they rose. The British meagre forces were hard put to it to cope with them. One battalion was surrounded at a place called Isandhlwana and perished to a man. In the heroic battle of Rorke's Drift British defence was more successful; but it took a force ten thousand strong from England to put the Zulus in their place.

Nor was this bad affair long over when fresh trouble burst upon England. The Boers had gradually been working up for war. They had taken great affront at England's seizure of the district around Kimberley, where she claimed the famous diamond fields in 1871; and, now that their liberty was once more taken from them, they felt their case to be intolerable. A promise had been made indeed of giving them self-government; but nothing came of it; the authorities at home still dallied

with the notion; and in 1881 the Boers were up. The *commandos* gathered. The British garrisons in the Transvaal were cut off; and presently the British officer-in-chief, named Sir George Colley, in attempting to move northwards from Natal to their relief, was overwhelmed. Beaten back with heavy losses at Laing's Neck, he was surrounded shortly after at Majuba Hill; and the whole of his small force was either killed or captured. This disaster brought about a critical situation; and England stood now, as it were, at the parting of the ways. Mr. Gladstone, who



FIG. 54.—BRITISH EXPANSION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

was then in power, had long been pondering in his elusive soul on the problems of Boer freedom. On entering office he had announced his firm intention of retaining the Republic under British rule. Before Majuba he had averred his readiness to treat about the question. After Majuba he threw up the sponge and gave the Boers their liberty. It was a rash concession; and it worked out ill. Elated by the triumph of their arms, the Boers took heart anew. Their President, Paul Kruger, was ambitious for his race. He saw a vision of the Boer Republics extending a powerful influence beyond their borders, repeating perhaps their recent feats of arms, and establishing—who knew if it were too

much to hope—a Dutch South Africa. Such was Paul Kruger's dream, and he prepared.

Rhodes' Forward Policy.—Meanwhile, the British residents in the Cape and other provinces had grown apace. The Kaffirs had long since been fought into submission. The Colony had become self-governing and was fast becoming rich: and there were many powerful merehants who had made their pile and who realized well enough the value of a British South Africa to themselves. One who was also rich, but who set England before riches, saw possibilities of a still grander sort, and dreamt of an Empire which should stretch beyond the Cape, beyond the Orange River and the Transvaal States, and reach into the dim and unexplored interior of the north. That man was Cecil Rhodes. This son of a Hertfordshire parson had gone out as a boy, with nothing in his pocket, to grow cotton in Natal. On the discovery of the diamond mines at Kimberley he had joined the general rush; and there, by sheer industry and force of character, he had built up a commanding position for himself. He became head of De Beers Consolidated Mines, and grew fabulously wealthy. But wealth for its own sake was not his goal. To him it was the mere means of securing a nobler cause, the cause he had most at heart. In his successive wills—and he made many—he always left the bulk of his huge fortune in trust for the British Empire's use; and no sooner was his financial position well secured than he bethought him of his ideal and turned to politics. In 1880 he took a seat in the Cape Parliament; and now it was that his work of territorial expansion was begun. He knew the country and he knew the tribes, as few other British knew them; and, as a result, he was frequently employed on commissions to the natives. In 1883 he was dispatched northwest to deal with the chiefs of Bechuanaland; and his persuasive influence there won England the addition of an enormous new protectorate. His next mission carried him farther still to Matabeleland, which lies north of Bechuana and the Transvaal. Here a chief called Lobengula was a powerful potentate; and it was resolved to approach him with a demand for trade concessions.

Rhodes' power of dealing with natives was astounding. Once, with a few companions, but unarmed and unescorted, he went into a campful of unfriendly warriors armed to the very teeth; there won the chieftain over by dint of argument, and ended by reading the fellow a stiff lecture upon the error of his ways. With Lobengula he wrestled hard and long; but in the end he triumphed and won the King's consent. A chartered company was licensed to exploit the land's resources; and in 1890 an official expedition was sent up country to install it. The Matabele subjects of King Lobengula were highly suspicious of this foreign influx; and, respecting their alarm, the British first occupied Mashonaland, which lies away to east of them. Further expansion, however, was inevitable; and, war breaking out a few years later, England occupied the Matabele country too. The whole enormous district which Rhodes' policy thus won was christened, after him, Rhodesia. "Equal rights for

every civilized man south of the Zambesi'' had been the watchword of Rhodes' enterprise. The Zambesi had now been reached. In 1890 Rhodes himself had become Prime Minister of the Cape; the future of South Africa lay in his hands; and the only obstacle which stood across his path and checked the realization of his great ambition was the hostile attitude of the two Boer Republics. They, unfortunately, did not believe in equal rights for every civilized man—still less did they believe in what we call liberty and progress. Rhodes knew them well; but with a true statesman's breadth of vision he desired to see them work along with England towards the common goal of a civilized South Africa. To this end he cultivated a friendly understanding with such Boers as had remained within British borders. He approached the Orange Free State with great schemes for laying railways and for opening up the country. He even wasted time in argument with Kruger. But the latter was as obstinate as only a Boer can be. He refused to let a railway cross his frontier. He tried to block the fords and thus sever all contact with the commerce of the Cape. His resistance in due time was overborne; but his attitude of hatred and suspicion was maintained. He was still playing with the dream of an all-Dutch South Africa; but not less obstinately was Rhodes resolved that, if South Africa was to belong to anyone at all, it was to be British and not Dutch—and the hour of decision was now near.

II

Unionist Government's Imperialism.—Such, then, was the legacy of Empire—pregnant no doubt with many anxious problems, yet on the whole secure and firmly knit—with which the British Government of the nineties was entrusted. In 1886, after the first Home Rule Bill and the fall of Gladstone, the Conservatives, or (as they now preferred to call themselves) the Unionists, had taken office. Lord Salisbury was their Premier, and they had an immense majority; but their achievements had scarcely been equal to their promise. They had arranged the celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee, passed a Bill creating County Councils, made national education free of charge, reduced the National Debt, and disappeared. For the General Election of 1892 had returned Gladstone once again to power. He failed, as we have seen, in his second effort to grant Home Rule to Ireland; then handed the reins of office to his Foreign Secretary, Lord Rosebery, and retired. Lord Rosebery had struggled on for eighteen months, but never passed a single vital Bill, though he framed many. The fact is that the Liberals were played out and the country was aware of it; and in 1895 the Unionists came back. This time Lord Salisbury included in his Cabinet one prominent seceder from the Liberal ranks, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. Gladstonian policies, and above all the Gladstonian policy for Ireland, had converted this Birmingham manufacturer into an ardent Unionist and a champion of the Imperialist ideal. The new Government indeed was strongly

pledged, not merely to maintain at any cost the Irish Union, but to knit up the Colonies with whatever ties might serve to bind them closer to ourselves. For the British public was now conscious of its destiny. It had lost all sympathy for Gladstone's squeamish conscience; it felt no qualms about "rising nationalities" in distant lands. On the contrary, it was very earnestly convinced that the British Empire was the world's greatest instrument for good; and it desired no better policy than to cast the net more widely. Men and women were beginning to attend lectures on the subject of the Colonies and to put it into books to teach their children. The most popular poet of the day was Rudyard Kipling, who trumpeted in verse the glories of dominion and sang of the white man's heavy burden in governing the black. Clearly the Salisbury Government had a mandate to go forward boldly on their course; and when the moment came, they did not fail.

The opportunity of making good their purpose came first in the Sudan. Egypt had been reformed with swift efficiency under the able administration of Lord Cromer; the corrupt and despotic methods of the old Mohammedan régime had been abolished; the irrigation of the fertile valley of the Nile made rapid progress; Egypt thrived, as she had never thriven since the day the Romans left her fifteen centuries before. But in the Sudan things were different. There the Mahdi's successor proved no better than the Mahdi; and the wild fanatic Dervishes made frequent raids on the lands of Southern Egypt. The reconquest of what Gladstone had abandoned was imperative. A trained Egyptian army was to hand. British regiments were drafted out to stiffen them; Kitchener was sent to organize the expedition, and he did it to perfection. In the heavy battle of Omdurman the Dervishes fought like men possessed. But the steady discipline of Kitchener's force was too much for these ill-armed savages. Khartoum was entered and the Sudan occupied. At the eleventh hour indeed there arose a crisis which bade fair to mar England's triumph. At Fashoda, near Khartoum, there suddenly appeared a small French force under Colonel Marchand, which had made its way overland from the far-distant Congo, and which aggressively claimed the South Sudan for France. The British Government stood firm, while Paris blustered; and the claim was eventually withdrawn. It was as well; for within a twelve-month England was involved in a struggle at the other end of Africa for which her full energies were needed.

Jameson Raid and Kruger's Plans.—For England's relations with the Transvaal were now strained to breaking-point; and the situation which had developed there was this. In 1886 goldfields had been discovered in the neighbourhood of what is now Johannesburg. The usual rush of adventurers had followed; and a large local population of British nationality had thus settled down under the Boer régime. As might have been expected, they were treated with hostility and insolence. They were bled white by taxes which were out of all proportion and which provided nineteen-twentieths of the whole Boer revenue. At the same

time all share in the country's political life was obstinately denied to them. They were not even allowed to have a vote. In short, the lot of these so-called "Uitlanders" was quite intolerable; and the Boer, intent on keeping his own country to himself, meant that it should be so. By 1895, however, the patience of the Uitlanders was exhausted, and a plot was set on foot for a great rising. At the last moment their courage failed them, and the rising was called off. But Dr. Jameson, the Matabeleland Commissioner, resolved on a bold stroke, and, collecting six hundred horsemen from his province, he rode upon Pretoria. This "Raid," as it was called, proved a ludicrous fiasco; but it did endless harm. It brought about the fall of Cecil Rhodes, who had given secret backing to the project. It aggravated the Uitlanders' condition; and it stiffened the resolve of the Boer President, Paul Kruger, to push the issue with Great Britain to the test of arms.

The Boer War.—His calculations, though at many points ill-founded, were not so crazy as appeared upon first sight. He believed he would get help from England's European rivals; but, though the Kaiser wired his congratulations on the defeat of Jameson's Raid, expressions of sympathy were all that Kruger got when the hour of reckoning came. No less erroneously, as the sequel was to prove, he counted on the co-operation of those fellow-Boers who still resided within the borders of Cape Province; very few fulfilled his hope. But, even without such external aids as these, the Boers were no despicable force. They had the advantage of long preparation; their farmer-soldiers were well mounted and armed with Mauser rifles. Siege guns had secretly been smuggled in from Europe; and, above all, they knew their country like a book. The British Government, in fact, had no conception with what kind of enemy they had to deal; but, ignorant or no of the Boer's fighting strength, they were determined to put him in his place. Mr. Chamberlain, as Colonial Secretary, and Sir Alfred Milner, as Governor of the Cape, undertook negotiations; but they were foredoomed to failure from the start. For there could now be no turning back. It was not perhaps a very glorious posture for a country like Great Britain to be threatening and browbeating two diminutive Republics; nor were the commercial magnates, who pressed hotly for strong measures, a particularly high-minded or disinterested lot. Yet the Boers themselves had long since made clear the issue. South Africa could count on neither peace nor progress so long as their wilful obstruction blocked the way. They left England little choice but to go forward. To have gone back would have been to ruin all; and, if with foreign nations England incurred the charge of unsportsmanlike behaviour, there were few who had a right to cast the stone at her. In October of 1899 Kruger's ultimatum reached England and she was at war with both Republics.

The opening stages of the three years' struggle were a severe shock to British confidence. England had badly underestimated her foe. In a brief time the Boers had taken the offensive. In the west they had invested British outlying stations, Mafeking and Kimberley. On the

south they had crossed the Orange River and invaded the Cape frontier. On the east—and this was their most determined effort—they had swept into Natal. Here British defence broke down disastrously; and after a series of forlorn engagements Sir George White was locked up in Ladysmith. Reserves, however, had been gathering at Cape Town, and Sir Redvers Buller, now England's *generalissimo*, was preparing to strike back. Most unhappily, though for a variety of reasons, he attempted to strike in three places at a time, and the result was three defeats. Lord Methuen in the west, while trying to reach Kimberley, was badly cut up on the hills of Magersfontein. Gatacre, sent to engage the invaders of Cape Colony, was led astray by guides on a night march and his men surprised into a panic. Buller himself, who had moved east into Natal, was checked in front of the Tugela River. Neither the general nor the soldiers under him were as yet familiar with the new conditions under which they fought. The Boers took cover with the skill of seasoned veterans; and when Buller moved against them in a front-to-front attack, British ranks, which were insufficiently deployed, afforded an easy target to an invisible foe. Buller's loss on the Tugela was not, in fact, excessive; but his repulse disheartened him; and, though the garrison of Ladysmith was sorely pressed, he refused to risk another battle. The news of these three defeats, reaching London in December, filled the British public with unfeigned alarm. But "Black Week," as it was called, undoubtedly provided the stimulus to effort that England needed. Troops were poured out to Cape Town. New corps of volunteers were hurriedly enrolled. Even the Colonies prepared to find contingents. And, most significant of all, the veteran Lord Roberts was sent out as *generalissimo* with Kitchener himself as chief of staff.

Lord Roberts' arrival in South Africa worked marvels. He reversed the whole strategy of Redvers Buller; and, while the latter was kept hammering on the Tugela River, England's main concentration was directed to the west. Here, covering Kimberley, lay Cronje's army; its size was not considerable, and, thanks to the secrecy of Roberts' movements, no steps had been taken to reinforce it. When all was ready, Sir John French's cavalry swept north round Cronje's flank and raised the siege of Kimberley. The infantry meanwhile struck in towards Bloemfontein, and, fearing for his communications with the Free State capital, Cronje was soon upon the run. He was rounded up at a place called Paardeberg and surrendered with fully four thousand men. Meanwhile, but only in the nick of time, Sir Redvers Buller had broken past the Boers on the Tugela and pushed up to Ladysmith. The garrison was half-starving when the relief arrived; but they had done their work. Their defence had occupied a large containing army and so helped to pave the way for the successes in the west. Thus, beaten in two theatres, the Boers' resistance collapsed suddenly. In March of 1900 Lord Roberts made his entry into the Free State capital. Dispatching a flying column to the relief of Baden-Powell up at Mafeking, he then himself proceeded against Pretoria. The Boers' now scattered forces

won a few local triumphs, but the main issue no longer stood in doubt. On 5 June the Transvaal capital was entered; and in November Lord Roberts sailed for home.

But the war was not yet over. The Boers, as we have shown, were stubborn fighters, and, what is more, they were slim folk to catch. There followed a long period of guerrilla warfare, with which at first it was difficult to cope. Treachery, too, often made the British task more arduous. A group of Boers would frequently surrender and deliver up their guns; then, when their opponents' backs were turned, they were out into the field again. The rolling uplands of the open veldt were ideal ground for stratagem; and the elusive tactics of such leaders as de Wet baffled English men's pursuit. England had long since learnt that in this sort of country one mounted man was of more use than ten on foot; but now it required the organizing genius of a Kitchener to devise effective methods of rounding up the foe. The end, in fact, did not come into sight till an elaborate block-house system was erected. Encircling lines were drawn round the disaffected areas; and "drives" were instituted to hunt the enemy bands. At length, perceiving that the game was up, the Boers surrendered in the June of 1902. Their country was, of course, annexed by England. But for the rest the terms were generous. England allowed them the use of the Dutch language in their schools; she spent five million pounds on the resettling of their farmers; and, above all, she pledged her word at a convenient date to grant them the privilege of self-government. That pledge was kept; for in 1906, not five years after hostilities were over, they received the status of Dominion Colonies. In 1910, with Natal and the Cape province, they were knit into a federated Union; and the first Prime Minister of the Union Parliament was General Botha, who had led them against England in the field. Thus, if the war was indeed England's fault—and this, when all is said, is very doubtful—she has at least atoned for it by an act of generosity unparalleled in the history of the world.

Problem of Imperial Constitution.—In the opening days of 1901, and before the war was over, Queen Victoria died. She had maintained to the last her vivid interest in the affairs of State; and her wise discretion in the use of royal power had greatly endeared her to the people whom she ruled. Not without cause the wonderful developments which her long reign had witnessed were in some measure identified with her; and men felt prophetically that the great period of success which England had enjoyed during her lifetime might indeed be needed with the close of it. Nevertheless, whatever troubles were eventually in store, things for a while went well. The Queen was succeeded by her eldest son, King Edward, a popular sovereign and a master of diplomacy and tact. The Unionist Ministry, which had begun the war, saw it safely through to a successful end; indeed, the enthusiasm which the campaign aroused had enabled the party to secure a new lease of office. At the General Election of 1900—the Khaki Election it is often called—the rallying cry of the Empire and the Flag had swept the polls; and the

Unionists came back under Mr. Balfour's leadership with no insignificant majority. Great opportunities were opened out before them. They had appealed to the spirit of a united world-dominion; and the answer had surpassed their fondest hope. Not merely had the people of Great Britain shouldered with a will the heavy task they had undertaken in South Africa; but the great self-governing dependencies—Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Newfoundland—had stood by the mother-country at her need, proving their loyalty by the sacrifice of their sons. On such a foundation there was building to be done; but the responsibilities involved were great.

One important problem soon emerged. The military needs of an Empire scattered broadcast through every quarter of the globe were thrown into a strong light by the events of the late war; and not unnaturally the great Dominions began to consider anxiously the question of defence. New Zealand and Australia were soon ordering battleships—a step of which Great Britain could scarcely but approve. Yet here was raised a problem which no one had thought out. If on their own initiative the Colonies prepare for war, on whose authority, it might be asked, do the Colonies then make it? The answer was, of course, that the Empire's foreign policy lay in the hands of England; but if England's authority could thus involve the Colonies, then it followed that clearly some political machinery was needed whereby to keep her Government acquainted with their views. Now, in point of fact, such machinery was growing, but it had not developed far. In 1887, the year of the Queen's Jubilee, a Colonial Conference was held in London, attended by the Premiers of the self-governing States and by representatives from India. The experiment was successful and the Conference was repeated, until now it has come to be regularly held at four-year intervals. No steps, however, have as yet been taken to give this important body constitutional powers. Its discussions are to a large extent informal. Its decisions are not binding; and, whatever policies the delegates advise, it still rests with the British Government to treat such recommendations as it pleases. Thus the self-governing rights of the Dominions remain still incomplete. In most important matters they are true masters of their destiny. They settle their own commercial tariffs; and in the business of taxation and administration England never interferes. Even the right to regulate the flow of immigration has been left to them; and the Australian Government, for instance, is determined to exclude yellow labour from their country. But in the all-important questions of peace and war the Dominions have, theoretically at least, no voice; and, as one colonial Premier has complained, he himself has had less say in the Imperial policy than if he had stayed at home as a citizen of England and exercised his Parliamentary vote.

Tariff Reform Mooted.—Such then was the situation at the close of the Boer war. The opportunity was offered; but whether or no the time was ripe for setting up an Imperial Constitution is difficult to say. The Colonies themselves were jealous of their free-

dom and naturally averse to any binding system. Nor had any British statesman the strength or foresight to propose one. The only proposal made for giving greater cohesion to the Empire was conceived upon very different lines. The most forceful member of the Balfour Cabinet was Joseph Chamberlain, a clear-headed, eloquent, inspiring politician, but also by both origin and instinct a pushing business man. To his mind trade was the one essential link for binding the Colonies to England; and he accordingly advanced a thoroughgoing scheme by which to stimulate commercial intercourse within the Empire. By imposing protective duties on the mass of foreign imports, while allowing colonial products to pass in duty free, he hoped that the "Preference" thus accorded to the Colonies would induce them to trade more exclusively with England. The proposal caught the fancy of many Unionists; and, though Mr. Balfour was unwilling to declare himself, "Tariff Reform" became the party cry. The project was still under discussion when there fell the General Election of 1905. It there received its deathblow. From one end of the country to the other the Unionists were routed; and the country's verdict was given with no uncertain voice.

The explanation of its attitude is easy. Free Trade was the foundation on which England's whole prosperity had hitherto been built. Protection, on the other hand, recalled the ugly memory of the Corn Laws and the days of the "Black Forties." The majority of Englishmen were unmoved by the advantage of extending Preferential treatment to the Colonies, if this meant at the same time that taxes would be levied on many of the staple necessities of life. They preferred Free Trade and a cheap loaf on their table to the less alluring prospect of a self-sufficient Empire and an expensive loaf. It was urged, as against this, that home industries would benefit by the foreigner's exclusion; but whether such would indeed have been the ultimate effect of Chamberlain's great scheme is for expert economists to judge; in any case the argument left the working classes cold. They would have none of it. Yet, perhaps deep down in the national intelligence there lay a more worthy, though unconscious, motive for the rejection of the policy. The defeat of the Unionists in 1905 marked a reaction against an Imperialism which had overreached itself. The war had roused a spirit which was out of keeping with the British character. There had been too much thumping, as it were, of the big drum, too much talk of the right of Englishmen to rule their fellow-men, and sentiments expressed too narrowly resembling the boast that Germans make of a "Kultur" to be imposed upon the world. The majority of Englishmen believed in the Empire and were grateful for its benefits; but they did not want an Empire aloof and self-contained, refusing, as it were, to make its contribution to the common stock of the world's prosperity and enterprise. In spite of all, the British are a generous race and like to have free dealings with their neighbours—the more, since it is a policy which seems to pay. The Empire very rightly they have always insisted on regarding as a means, and not as an end. It has raised up many peoples from a low and bar-

barous standard of existence and has given them the chance to live at peace and live like men. It has brought into being great and self-respecting States, modelled on the basis of those free institutions which England herself has so successfully evolved; and, wherever her dependencies have proved fit to shape their destiny, she has been content to leave it largely in their hands, valuing for them the right of self-development which she has found so valuable. It is by continued loyalty to these ideals, and not by the artificial bonds of pure self-interest, that England and the Colonies hold together.¹ For the British Empire could not have been won, far less could have been held, unless the spirit of a free and generous people had guided its destiny at every turn.

CHAPTER XV

THE RISE OF LABOUR

It is hard to disentangle the affairs of a time so near to us as the years which intervened between the fall of the Balfour Ministry in 1905 and the outbreak of the war in 1914. It was a busy rather than an eventful period. No very momentous issues seemed at stake; yet England somehow was restless and ill at ease. The old complacent, comfortable days of the Victorian era were gone by; the great dominating figures—Gladstone in politics, Browning and Tennyson in letters, Ruskin in art—had vanished from the stage; and, as the complexities and problems of British civilization became more huge and overwhelming, individualities appeared to shrink. Men felt that they were living in an age of little men; they accused themselves of decadence, and declared that all ideals had been lost. Warnings of the impending German peril were disregarded. Politicians squabbled over what now seem foolish trifles. There was no clear vision; and it was hard to say what mattered or what did not. Nevertheless one fact seems pretty certain. The real outstanding feature of this decade was the emergence of the Labouring Man as a new political force. Hitherto, though normally dissatisfied and frequently rebellious, he had been for the most part inarticulate, or at any rate incapable of making his voice heard in the councils of the nation. To-day that voice has swelled in magnitude and violence, till it almost seems at times to drown all others. The rise of Labour has been

¹ How strong is the sentimental tie which binds the Empire together, was proved in an interesting fashion shortly after the Unionist downfall. Under President Taft's administration the United States offered to lower the tariff of duties on Canadian goods, provided a similar reduction were made in the duties levied on their own. The offer was refused; and, though perhaps the refusal was in part dictated by the desire of Canadian financiers to keep Canadian trade along the lines which they had planned, yet public opinion as a whole was mainly swayed by the larger consideration, that the colony's independence and its loyalty to the Empire required it to keep free from any such entanglement, however advantageous to its pocket.

swift indeed. For it was only in the years immediately before the War that the working man of England began at last to realize his strength. In those years, whatever else may have been happening to obscure it, we seem to hear the first premonitory rumbling as of a giant awakened out of sleep.

Growth of Trades Unions.—Since the days of Chartism and the Anti-Corn Law movement there had been, as we may guess, enormous changes. The workers were no longer now regarded as a superior sort of animal, to be used much as animals are used and, if insubordinate, to be suppressed by force. The national conscience had been stirred from its indifference to the sufferings of the poor. Laws had been passed compelling masters to regard the health and safety, if not as yet the welfare, of their men. The ban upon Trades Unions had altogether vanished. Free education had given every one some chance to make his way; and by the extension of the franchise the majority of adults had secured the privilege of a Parliamentary vote. Poverty, too, was by now less universal. After the abolition of the Corn Laws the country had grown prosperous; and, although of course there had been ups and downs, the working class had reaped a certain share in that prosperity. If, perhaps, a third of them still hung upon the border-line of abject poverty, the average man was able now to live in a self-respecting fashion, and unusual skill could frequently demand a very substantial wage. But such improvement in the working-man's condition did not by any means imply that he was satisfied.

History has shown that it is not always the most wretched and down-trodden class which rebels most readily against its lot; on the contrary, it is the man who has already made some progress that realizes best how much remains to win and who reaches out for more. So the organization of the Labour movement has proceeded from the better paid workers who could afford to collect funds; and it has spread by a slow transition from the skilled minority to the great mass of the unskilled. Such organization has taken years to build. Since the repeal of the Combination Act in 1824 Trades Unions had, of course, existed in some form; but it was the greater liberty Disraeli gave them in 1875 which marked the true beginning of their latter day success. In the last quarter of the century the number of the Unions was very nearly doubled. By the century's close their membership included perhaps two million men; and within the next twelve years as many more were added. Meanwhile energetic war had been waged against employers; and great strikes, such as the Dockers' Strike in 1889, had revealed the power which Labour, if united, could command. Nor had the old bitterness between men and masters been allayed by the gradual improvement in both wages and conditions. Indeed, if anything, the breach had widened, and this for various reasons. In the first place, England's industries had so increased in scale that master and men were no longer on familiar terms of daily intercourse. In earlier times they knew each other well, and such knowledge contributed to a friendly understanding.

But now the owner of perhaps a dozen factories stayed at his central office and seldom visited the works. So the human touch was lost; and the system came to resemble a huge, impersonal, and implacable machine. Then again, while the working man was adding a few shillings to his wages, he was tantalized by seeing the big commercial magnate grow rich beyond all dreams. The fact is that the increased wealth which the community was enjoying was very unevenly distributed. "To him that hath shall be given" appeared to be the law of modern economics; and the master of a coal-mine or a factory piled up his fortune by the simple process of accumulation, often through no industry or merit of his own. So the "Capitalist" class who owned this "Capital"—owned, that is to say, the machinery or plant by which raw material or manufactured goods could be produced—came soon to be regarded by the workers as a set of useless drones, privileged to control their labour and wax fat upon its proceeds by no other right than the mere title of possession. This right the working man now began seriously to challenge. He saw the great resources of the country—the coal-mines, the railways, the factories, and the rest—parcelled out, as it were, among a few rich men, and he himself excluded from all share in their vast profits. He felt that the whole fabric of modern industry, resting as it does upon the exclusive right of private ownership, had been built upon a wrong foundation. He began to ponder how the mistake might be corrected; and, once the idea was mooted of dispossessing the "Capitalist," theories began to rise about the uses to which Capital itself might in that event be put.

Socialists and Syndicalists.—Such theories were not new. Men like Robert Owen had held views upon the subject in the first half of the century. A little later, the German Socialist, Karl Marx, had exercised a world-wide influence, predicting in fierce tones the inevitable fall of the capitalist, and heralding as a sure and certain fact an almighty revolution which should one day bring the workers to their own. In England (where Karl Marx eventually found harbourage) many earnest thinkers such as William Morris had propounded various schemes. By the beginning of the new century, however, two main schools of thought may have been said to hold the field; and between these two the British Labour leaders were divided. One group, and that the larger of the two, were Socialists in the true meaning of the term. They believed, in other words, that the ownership of "Capital" should be vested in the hands of the "Society" or State; that the mines, the factories, the railways, and even perhaps the land, should belong not to individuals, but to Government itself, and by Government should be administered, as the interest of the community dictates. Such "nationalization," as we should call it now, could either be accomplished by downright confiscation or by the more equitable process of buying the existing owners out. In whichever case the policy would involve no great or terrible upheaval; it would not even involve a break with the normal methods of Parliamentary government; and the great change would be effected under the



A MODERN FACTORY TOWN—SHEFFIELD

guise of law. The Socialist group, in short, were for accomplishing their purpose by constitutional and not by revolutionary methods. The other group were of more extreme opinions. They held vaguely that the workers should *themselves* possess the mines and factories they work. Syndicalists was the name these theorists sometimes went by; but into their camp were gathered all the various violent elements which made for the destruction of existing institutions and for a clean cut with the past. Such men felt that to work for any master—were he private individual or Minister of State—was at best a demeaning task—a state of industrial slavery unhappily surviving when political slavery had long since been done away. Socialism proper would not, they realized, avail to terminate such slavery; for it would merely divert them from the service of their masters to the service of the State. These men's policy was, therefore, to press on the final issue between employers and employed—from strike to revolution, and from revolution to a form of society completely new, in which the workers would at length be true masters of their destiny, working no longer for a master's profits, but producing for their own benefit alone. Meanwhile, by dint of an organized campaign, they meant to push their wages up and up, until the capitalist's position should become untenable. Industrial action through the strike, not Parliamentary action through the ballot-box, was to them the only way.

The Labour Party and Lloyd George.—Such, briefly, was the situation in the world of Labour when the General Election of 1906 took place. To the Constitutional or Socialist section of Labour it was a grand opportunity for making a big effort. The time indeed was ripe for a political campaign. Education had begun to take effect; the working man had come by now to realize the value of his vote; and, if votes alone were an index of success, the electioneering of the Socialist party was undoubtedly a triumph. Hitherto the true representative of Labour had been somewhat of a rarity in Parliament. Mr. Keir Hardie's uncompromising figure was regarded with amusement; and nobody had thought of taking such wild men seriously. But in the Election of 1906 many a seat was contested by official Labour candidates; and in the sweeping victory which the Liberal party won these Labour candidates enjoyed a generous share. Over fifty were returned to Parliament, one section known as the Independent Labour party, being more or less definitely pledged to a policy of "Socialist" reform. Their number was, of course, comparatively small in a house six hundred and seventy strong. They were without experience in Parliamentary tactics; and their leader, Ramsay Macdonald, lacked a statesman's force. Nevertheless, from the start the Labour party's influence was felt; for, as luck would have it, the Liberal Government was sympathetically inclined. They were anxious to show that they too were representative of the People; and within the Cabinet itself there was more than one Minister who had the working man's cause very genuinely at heart. John Burns, the stalwart self-made man from Battersea, had been promoted to the Local

Government Board; and more important still, though at that date less well known, there was the clever Welsh attorney, David Lloyd George, whom Campbell-Bannerman, the Liberal Premier, had picked out for his evident ability and put in office at the Board of Trade.

Lloyd George's rise was miraculously swift. During the days of the Boer War he had made himself unpopular by questioning the justice of England's case; and once at a public meeting held in Birmingham he had been forced to flee from the pursuit of infuriated patriots, disguised, so rumour had it, in policeman's clothes. Such moral independence proved at any rate his courage; and he was now to display other qualities besides. He possessed the imagination to conceive great measures, the doggedness to fight down opposition, and, above all, the eloquence to win support. On the platform his Celtic ardour glowed with the fierce energy of a man inspired. His racy rhetoric could touch the emotions of the most humdrum audience; and, lacking restraint, he was not always overscrupulous in his appeal to instincts and passions which are best ignored. When on Campbell-Bannerman's death in 1908 Mr. Asquith succeeded to the Premiership, Lloyd George was raised to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. His position in the Ministry, aided by the magnetic influence of his enthusiasm, served to carry the Liberal party forward into unpremeditated paths. Had the Labour party itself come into office, it is scarcely likely that it would have effected more for the welfare of the masses; and the House of Commons had a busy time.

The Legislation passed during these years covered a wide field; but in essence nearly all of it was of a "Socialistic" type; that is to say, it took out of the hands of individuals and placed under the authority of the State much that closely concerned the Englishman's daily life. In the nation schools, for instance, finding that many of the pupils were but ill-provided for the midday meal, the Government devised a scheme for feeding them at public cost. Medical inspection of the children was also provided gratis; and, to prevent unemployment, a system of Exchange Bureaux was started, for giving workmen information where employment may be found. All this was a very definite departure from the old Whig principle of *laissez faire*. But the eager Liberal Government had now whole-heartedly embraced the doctrine that the State should intervene in aid of those who cannot help themselves. Indeed, they were preparing to go further still; for they adopted the much more disputable doctrine that, where the poor, as such, need helping, the rich, as such, should pay: In the past, of course, the rich had very substantially contributed to such national expenses as the upkeep of the schools; but they contributed as citizens, and, as citizens, they were equally entitled, if they chose, to make use of the schools for their own children.

Insurance Act and Land Taxes.—Now, however, they were made to pay for what they could not share. In 1908 an Act was passed providing all old persons of seventy and upwards with a pension of five shillings every week. The funds came mainly from the rich man's pocket;

for of the poor no contribution was required. But only the poor could enjoy the benefits; for, if the aged person had more than a trifling income, the pension was withheld. The critics of the measure called it pampering, and bewailed such a discouragement to individual thrift; yet the reform had great advantages; many deserving folk were saved from the indignity of ending their days in the workhouse; and, if the principle of the law was novel, its effects were good. Still more was this the case with the Insurance Act of 1911. Here it was felt, and not without good reason, that the nation's health had hitherto received inadequate attention. Some, no doubt, among the working classes could afford to pay for doctoring. The more prosperous and prudent paid money to a club or common fund, on which, if they fell sick, they could draw to meet the doctor's bill. But there was a very large proportion of the working class which was not so insured; and the Liberals accordingly determined to make Insurance compulsory on all—that is, on all the poor. Every employed person was to pay a few pence weekly; every employer was to pay as much again; and the State would add its share. From this fund free medical attendance and sick pay were provided for the person so insured: and, though the scheme has drawbacks, there can be little doubt that thousands upon thousands have been saved thereby from permanent disablement or premature death.

Perhaps, however, the most famous step in the "Socialist" direction was the Land Act framed by the Chancellor in the same year. It was an old complaint, as we have said above, that certain folk grew rich through the right of mere possession and through no merit of their own. If, for example, a man owned a plot of land upon the outskirts of a town, the value of his plot might well be trebled, when houses spread that way; yet he himself would have actually done nothing to deserve the "increment." It was this unmerited or "unearned increment" that Lloyd George proceeded to attack, claiming for the Exchequer a percentage of the profit on the sale of such estates. He aroused a storm of protest. Proprietors throughout the country were naturally indignant and called him ugly names. But the Welshman's blood was up; and he proceeded to denounce the wealthy landlords for their selfish misuses of the nation's precious land. His scheme included a tax upon estates which had been left "undeveloped," withheld, that is to say, from productive cultivation. Grouse moors, he maintained, should be put under the plough instead of being wasted upon rich sportsmen's pleasure; and he drew a lively picture of the available employment, should every park and flower-garden be converted into fields. In this Socialistic talk no doubt there was much exaggeration; and the Chancellor's refusal of an extensive estate in Scotland, offered by a well-known peer on easy terms, disclosed the hollowness of his pretensions. Yet the discussion of the issue was vigorously pursued; and Lloyd George pressed his case with a flood of giddy rhetoric. Very little money was brought into the Exchequer by the land taxation he applied; but a deal of bitter feeling was aroused by his attempt to set the different classes of the com-

munity at variance. Such appeals to social prejudice as his notorious Limehouse speech have encouraged the poor to regard their richer neighbours as natural enemies; and in later times it was to need all Lloyd George's eloquence to heal the discord fostered by the utterances of his less prudent days.

The Parliament Act.—But of all the issues raised during these years the most fiercely and bitterly contested concerned the House of Lords; and the most permanent achievement of the Liberal Ministry was to alter the fabric of the British Constitution. Throughout its lengthy history it has been an obvious, though unenviable, duty of the Second Chamber to act as a brake upon the impulsive legislation of the Lower House. By temper and by precedent the Peers are naturally conservative; and in a sense it is their part to be so. To the Liberals, however, it was particularly galling to find their schemes frustrated and their reforms cut short by the veto of the Lords. Several Bills to which they had attached considerable importance were summarily dismissed, sometimes without debate. One, amongst others, for cutting down the number of superfluous public-houses was thrown out in 1908; and not without some justice it was felt that the rich brewers had used their influence to work up the opposition of the Lords. The climax came, however, when in the following year the Liberals' Budget met with the same fate. Such a step was without precedent; for by long-established custom the right of taxation had become a privilege peculiar to the Commons and a privilege with which the Lords had never interfered. On the other hand, if their action was unusual, the Lords could plead that the Budget in question was unusual too; for, besides provision for the normal revenue, it contained arrangements for Lloyd George's land taxation; and this, so the Lords argued, involved a new and fundamental change concerned not so much with revenue and taxes as with rights of ownership and principles of law. Argument, however, was of no avail. The patience of the Liberals was exhausted. They appealed in autumn to the verdict of the polls; and by a slender margin the nation backed them up. When they came back to Westminster at the beginning of 1910, they outnumbered the Conservatives by a majority of two. With the support, however, of the Labour party and the Irish Nationalists they could count on victory; and such support was certainly forthcoming.

Yet there still remained a stern battle to be waged; and all through that spring and summer the controversy ran on. The Conservatives, who were in no mood for tame surrender, put forward alternative proposals. They maintained that the Liberals had been returned to Parliament on a variety of issues, and that to ascertain the people's genuine verdict on this one straightforward question a special vote or "referendum" should be taken. The Liberals, however, were most unwilling to surrender their advantage, and were now resolved that, come what might, the veto of the Lords must be somehow curtailed. In May King Edward, who had tried to mediate, broke down in health and died.

Compromise was then seen to be impossible; and the Liberal Government pressed on a measure depriving the Upper House of its right of absolute veto, and allowing it merely to delay a Bill's enactment for a period of two years. This measure passed the Commons, and was sent up to the Lords; so on the Lords once more, as another year was ending, the eyes of all Englishmen were fixed. Would they gracefully consent to the passage of the measure and so sign their own death-warrant, or would they still refuse to bow the neck? They still refused; and for the second time within a twelvemonth the Liberals appealed to the constituencies. The verdict given at the polls was just the same. The Liberals now came back in a majority of one, but confident of help, as upon the first occasion, from the Irish party and the Labour men. Mr. Asquith, moreover, held a weapon in reserve. Should the Lords continue their obstinate resistance, he was ready, like Lord Grey at the great Reform Bill crisis, to create new Peers in a sufficient number to swamp their opposition; and, what is more he had the King's assent. Then with infinite reluctance the Lords submitted to their fate. Some, vowing that to save the Constitution they would "die in the last ditch," stuck stoutly to their colours and cast votes against the Bill.¹ But the greater part, showing more dignity and prudence, stayed away; and by seventeen votes in a half-deserted chamber the "Parliament Act" went through the House of Lords.

Thus the Constitution, handed down through six long centuries, was destroyed within a year; and the people's elected representatives became henceforward the sole sovereign power within the State. Yet common sense had not quite deserted the English people. The need for a Second Chamber was universally admitted; and even the Liberals felt that, though shorn of its old powers, such a Chamber should at least command respect. Now, whatever might be said for the existing system of hereditary Peers, its weakness lay in the transparent fact that it represented no one; and here, as the Conservatives themselves agreed, there was room for some reform. They therefore welcomed a hint contained in the preamble of the Bill, that at some future date the composition of the Upper House should be revised, and the system of nomination should be set, if possible, on a more representative basis. Seventeen years have passed; nothing has been done, and the fulfilment of the pledge is long since overdue. Yet the strange thing is that the House of Lords is perhaps even more respected to-day than before the Act was passed.

Labour Agitations.—So complete a triumph was enough, one would imagine, to satisfy the most ardent apostle of democracy. The Labour party at any rate had good reason to be satisfied. In more ways than one the passage of the Bill was to them an earnest of victories yet to come. It had cleared away the most serious obstacle to their own revo-

¹ The Conservatives' dislike of the Bill was much intensified by the knowledge that the first use made by the Liberals of their victory would be to pass Home Rule for Ireland.

lutionary schemes. It had brought them more than ever into favour with the Government; for without their added vote the Liberal majority alone would scarcely have sufficed; and for the services thus rendered they now expected their reward. A further instalment of Socialistic legislation was in view. Yet, strange to say, at the very moment when their prospects seemed most bright, the Labour party found that it had lost the confidence of its own constituents. Working men throughout the country had seen with satisfaction the return of their candidates in 1906. They, too, had for the moment pinned their faith upon the efficacy of Parliamentary action; and they had hoped for great results. Five years had passed; and what after all was there to show for it? The hated Capitalist still ruled supreme. The Government had not thought fit to dispossess him of the railways or the mines; and, in the profits of industry which still went to swell his fortune, the working class themselves had got no share. Little wonder then that the rank and file of Labour were out of patience with the slow, unadventurous tactics of their representatives in Parliament. If constitutional action was so sadly ineffective, the second alternative was still waiting to be tried; and the mass of working-class opinion swung suddenly round towards the champions of the Strike.

This vigorous faction had not meantime been idle. The organizers of the Trade Union movement had long since come to realize that in unity alone lay their prospect of success. Divided counsels spelt inevitable failure; if one set of miners struck, while others stayed at work, the issue was almost bound to go against them; and the Trades Unions therefore were making strenuous efforts to gain greater solidarity within their ranks. Since the beginning of the century much progress had been made. The membership, as we have said, had practically doubled; and there was less danger now that the labour of non-unionists or "black-legs" would avail to break a strike. More important still, the various rival Unions had striven to compose their differences and work in unison. The separate societies of railwaymen, for instance, were now fused to form one whole. Similar amalgamation had taken place in other trades; and, if the Union leaders thought fit to call a strike, they could now count with some reasonable assurance on paralyzing their industry completely. Their power, in fact, was great; yet, as the sequel was to prove, not so great as they imagined; and their schemes in some directions outran all limits of the practical. One favourite project was to win all at a blow by the simple expedient of a "General Strike," in which every worker throughout the entire country would participate. In practice the scheme was little likely to succeed. The mass of Englishmen are too conservative for such adventures; and the Unions were too jealous or suspicious of each other to combine. Failing this, it was still argued that, if one whole industry downed tools together, great results might be obtained, and, when the failure of the Labour men in Parliament had begun to bring discredit on the "Constitutional" party, the champions of industrial action recognized their chance. In 1911

a general strike of railwaymen was called. The men's leaders had claimed the right to treat with the Companies' Directors on questions of discipline and wages. The Directors had refused to accord the leaders such official recognition; and, feeling the demand to be fully justified, the men came out *en masse*. For a few days the transport system of the country was almost at a standstill; and no one could foretell what the end of it would be.

It so happened, however, that at this very moment a serious foreign crisis intervened. War seemed imminent; and an appeal to the patriotic feelings of the strikers brought them back at once to work. Their demand for "recognition" was eventually conceded; and, though their strike had won no decisive triumph, the example of the railwaymen encouraged other trades to follow suit. During the next three years the industrial world was in a ferment. Claim followed claim with bewildering rapidity; and nothing seemed to satisfy the men. The Government did what it could to mediate; but it seldom succeeded in keeping the peace. In 1912 alone more than eight hundred strikes took place, affecting a million and a half employees; and the total number of hours lost during the year ran to over forty million. Meanwhile, too, the Labour leaders were busy with fresh plans. Greater solidarity was still the cry; and shortly before the War an important step was taken towards the old ideal of the "General Strike." An alliance was struck up between three great bodies of industrial workers—the three most vital to the nation's daily life—the miners, the transport workers, and the railwaymen. In the event of one of these embarking on a strike, the other two were, in a manner, pledged to lend assistance; and, though it remained doubtful how far the men in practice would be willing to sacrifice themselves to help their colleagues, the leaders were intoxicated by a growing sense of the tremendous power they wielded. The outbreak of the War cut short for the time being their more ambitious projects; but in the long run it served the cause of Labour well. Wages mounted. Claims, hitherto rejected, were hastily conceded, as the only method of keeping the men at work; and Labour emerged from the prolonged ordeal in a far stronger position than before. Yet the Capitalist also was still strong. The extremists on both sides were still unsatisfied; and the struggle which was in progress when the War began was resumed with added vigour at its close. Masters and men have yet to learn that neither of them can prosper unless the other prospers too.

Female Suffrage Agitation.—Troubles seldom, they say, come singly; and Labour unrest was but one of many difficulties which disturbed the peace of the Liberal Ministry during its later years. One constant source of annoyance was the Female Suffrage movement which was now gathering great force. Women, who for the most part came of well-to-do connections, pressed their claim to share the vote with the zeal and fury of fanatics. From protest and agitation they passed to open violence. Ministers were waylaid; public buildings set on fire; and threats of still more vigorous measures filled the air. The patience of

the policemen was severely taxed in dealing with these frenzied Amazons. Meetings in Trafalgar Square and other parts of London had to be broken up by force. Ringleaders were arrested in large numbers; and some, to complicate their captors' task, attached themselves by chains to posts and railings. Once in prison, however, the Suffragettes were even more of a nuisance than when they were at large. Many went on hunger-strike and left the Government to choose between setting them at liberty and the more odious alternative of allowing them to die. Forceful feeding was tried; but it was not a great success, and a middle course was taken. The hunger-strikers were released from jail when their symptoms grew alarming, and arrested again as soon as they were well. So the farce went on, till the War came and stopped the folly. The patriotic bearing of multitudes of women and the useful aid they rendered in the Red Cross or other services secured them in due course the just concession which their factious agitation had made it difficult to grant. In 1917 the franchise was extended to women over thirty, and six million fresh voters were thus added to the register. What effect this change may have on party politics is as yet an unsolved enigma; but women's capacity to deal with public business becomes every year more evident. They have served on Government Committees, in the Civil Service offices, and in every department of local administration. Lady members have even been returned to Westminster; and thus the sex which was once regarded as the chattel of the male has now attained an equal right with men to express its opinions and defend its rights.

Home Rule and Ulster's Opposition.—One other problem—and that of more serious import—lay across the path of the harassed Liberal Government. When the Parliament Act was going through the Commons, the vote of the Irish Nationalists had been almost indispensable to the Liberals' victory. But that vote was not given for nothing. A pledge had been exacted that, when the House of Lords was tamed, the Home Rule scheme which, nearly twenty years before, the Lords' veto had frustrated should once more be revived; and now Mr. Redmond, the Nationalist leader, claimed the fulfilment of that pledge. The Liberals accordingly introduced a measure much on Mr. Gladstone's lines. It was proposed to establish a separate Parliament in Dublin which should deal with all lesser questions of Irish legislation, while the Parliament at Westminster (still containing Irish members) should keep entire control of foreign policy and regulate such matters as defence. Such a proposal was, of course, resisted by its traditional opponents. All the old objections which had been used in Gladstone's day were brought up and urged anew; but the Unionist opposition might argue themselves hoarse; they were overborne by numbers and it was now a moral certainty the Bill would pass. The House of Lords might delay it for a season; but they could do no more; and within a year or two (if the Liberals retained office) Home Rule would be a fact. The real question, therefore, was no longer whether Ireland would become self-

governing, but what precisely would happen when she did.¹ That there would be serious trouble was not difficult to see. In each of the four provinces, but more particularly in the northern province, Ulster, there were still living the descendants of those Scottish and English settlers who had been planted there at various times gone by. These folk felt no desire to be governed by a Dublin Parliament, in which the majority was certain to be Catholic, and which, as they felt sure, would let slip no opportunity of making life intolerable for them. Unlike the native Irishmen, this Anglo-Scottish element was prosperous and industrious; the manufactures of Belfast and the north lay largely in their hands; and, seeing that Ireland in the main is agricultural, these manufactures formed no small proportion of the country's wealth. The liveliest fears were therefore entertained lest under a jealous and revengeful Home Rule Parliament the north would be bled white by an oppressive and extortionate taxation. Rather than submit passively to such a fate the men of Ulster were prepared for anything. The old grim spirit of their Scottish ancestors lived on in these determined loyalists. "Ulster will fight," said a wise man in Gladstone's day, "and Ulster will be right." It looked, indeed, as though the prophecy were true. For aptly to the moment a leader had appeared.

Sir Edward Carson, a well-known barrister and an astute Parliamentary hand, announced his intention of organizing the Ulstermen's resistance. Volunteers were called for; and the call was eagerly answered. Large bands paraded in the Belfast streets and drilled with dummy guns; and meanwhile more serviceable weapons were smuggled over in large quantities. This was a game, however, at which two could play; and, taking their cue from Sir Edward Carson's tactics, the Nationalists also began to drill their men. Thus, while the British Government was wondering how to stop these dangerous movements, Ireland itself was rapidly converted into two armed and hostile camps. Ulster was defiant and prepared. The Nationalist volunteers, though less efficient, were spoiling for a fight; and a single chance encounter might almost at any moment have plunged the country into civil war. At length the Liberal Government was roused to action and determined to disarm these amateur contingents. The intention was kept dark; but secret orders were conveyed to the commanders of the British regiments then stationed in the country. Suddenly in the spring of 1914 the public were startled by the alarming news that mutiny had broken out in the great Curragh camp. The fact was that certain officers, who had been ordered, as they understood, to march on Ulster, had refused point blank to move; and, rather than assist to put down a loyal cause with which they fully sympathized at heart, they preferred to abandon their commissions. All England was thrown into a flutter of excitement. The discipline of the army was seen to be at stake. Generals resigned. Ministers prevaricated;

¹ The Bill actually became law at the beginning of the War; but the situation in Ireland made it impossible to carry the law into effect.

and those who were thought to have issued the original instructions were bitterly assailed. Then, just when men were speculating whether Civil War would follow or the Liberal Ministry would fall from power, the storm-cloud which had been lowering over Europe broke and Armageddon was upon all the nations. In those anxious months of autumn, when England's very existence seemed to hang upon a thread, the Irish imbroglio was naturally forgotten. It would have been well, as subsequent events have proved, had England also possessed the courage to forgive. One generous gesture at that crisis of her fate might well have earned her the Irishman's eternal gratitude; and a measure of Home Rule which later on contented no one might then have achieved success such as scarcely the most sanguine among Englishmen dared hope. But, as often before, the Liberal Government faltered. Mr. Asquith, with all his skill in Parliamentary tactics and his lawyer's gift for lucid argument, was not the man to run great risks for an ideal. In the phrase which he himself so often used, he preferred to "wait and see"; and the opportunity was lost.

CHAPTER XVI

THE YEARS BETWEEN

In the European history of the last half-century two dates will stand conspicuous—1871 and 1914. In 1871 arose the German Empire, the consummation of Bismarck's strong diplomacy, built upon the ruins of defeated France. In 1914 that Empire's whole existence was staked upon a challenge issued, like Napoleon's, to the rest of Europe for the world's supremacy at arms. In the years between—four-and-forty years of peace which was no peace—was forged the terrible instrument fit to deliver such a blow and the national spirit which, when the time came, should have the hardihood to use it. Directly, at least, Bismarck was not responsible. The object of his aggression having been achieved in the overthrow of France, he was content to let well alone and to maintain by a defensive policy the great place that Germany had won. The defeated enemy was allowed no opportunity of raising up her head, much less of taking her revenge, and more than once in the years following Sedan, when her recovery appeared to him too perilously rapid, Bismarck threatened her with fresh invasion. He was warned off by England; and thereafter he made shift to hold France down by the less brutal, but scarcely less effective, method of keeping her in political isolation. Russia, of all the Powers, was her most likely friend; but German diplomacy had many shifts, and the Tsar was not difficult to manage. Bismarck humoured him, and made him see that his own interests as a despot were closely interlinked with those of his fellow-despot on the Prussian throne. But, although this secret understanding with St. Petersburg dispelled the likelihood of a Russo-French alliance, yet

Bismarck was well aware that the Tsar's favours were at best precarious; and he did not scruple to use the Russian bogey as a means of securing for his own country a more staunch and serviceable friend. By playing on old fears of her big, restless neighbour, he compelled Austria more and more to lean on Germany; and in 1879 a pact for mutual aid against the Russian menace was arranged between Vienna and Berlin. It remained to entice Italy within the circle; and by setting her at loggerheads with France over North Africa this equally was done. In 1882, therefore, a "Triple Alliance" was concluded; and Germany and Italy and Austria, though apparently predestined, by every circumstance of history and tradition, to perpetual feud; were thus by Bismarck's incomparable diplomacy knit in one solid block. The Balance of Power was thereby redistributed; but the Chancellor's achievement, while confirming the preponderance of Germany in Europe, made at least for the security of Europe's peace. For twenty years the helplessness of France and the cautious self-restraint of German policy encouraged hopes of a lasting equilibrium. Then in a twinkling all was changed. In 1888 William I of Prussia died. His successor, Frederick, mounted to the throne a doomed and dying man. A brief hundred days of rule and he was gone. His son William II, a young man of nine-and-twenty, reigned in his stead; and among the first foolish acts of a long and foolish reign was the dismissal of the man who had made Germany great. Like George III, William was determined "to be King." He refused to be Bismarck's or anyone's disciple. So, without as much as thank you, he dropped "the Pilot" overboard and himself stood to the helm.¹

The Kaiser and Colonial Empire.—The Kaiser William was a man of many qualities. He could make a speech, paint a picture, or compose a military march. His imagination, though impetuous, was fertile. He would have cut a figure in any walk of life. But the desire to cut a figure proved, in fact, to be his curse. He was for ever acting to a part, and, whatever were that part, he overdid it. Was a battle to take place upon manœuvres, he must needs appear to lead the cavalry in person, got up for the occasion in a uniform most carefully selected from the three hundred stocked in his capacious wardrobe. Admiral or orator, connoisseur or statesman, he took up every rôle with a vain-glorious gusto, which made the wiser Germans laugh. But, unhappily, the rôle which he himself most fancied, and for which at the same time he was most ludicrously unfit, was one which flattered the national conceit and compelled the admiration of his servile folk. No mere play-actor can dominate the universe; yet such was the aspiration of this man. "Nothing," he once said, "shall hereafter be settled in the world without the intervention of the German Emperor"; and to this the German people echoed a proud assent.

¹ Recent disclosures, however, have shown that the fault was not all on one side, and that the stubbornness and pride of Bismarck were in part responsible for the breach.

It was barely twenty years since they had become a nation; yet already they were conscious of a great and glorious destiny. Their numbers were fast increasing—from barely forty millions in 1871 to nearly half as many again before the century's close—and a forceful foreign policy was therefore not unnatural to a race endowed with all the ambition and energy of youth. The fact is that even before the accession of the Kaiser such a policy had been resolutely urged, and in Bismarck's day—though against Bismarck's better judgment—bold projects had been laid for expansion overseas. It was the time when Africa was being opened up; and no sooner were the continent's resources brought to light than every State in Europe fell to scrambling for its share. The Belgians were on the Congo; the Portuguese had stations on the southeast and southwest coast; and England was well established both in Egypt and at the Cape; the German Government, therefore, not to be outdone, had also staked off its claim. In 1883 a large strip of the west coast, adjoining what was soon to become British Bechuanaland, had been occupied by German pioneers. Next year upon the Gold Coast they gained a further footing in Togoland and in the Cameroons. These Colonies were exploited with the thorough-going industry so characteristic of all German State-run enterprise. What was less meritorious, if not less typical, the native inhabitants were brutally maltreated; and, since these lands were ill-adapted to extensive emigration, the undertaking was at most a very qualified success.

The young Kaiser, however, did not see it in that light. He simultaneously boasted of what empire he possessed and chafed under the sense of its comparative insignificance. Of the British world-dominion he was, of course, supremely jealous; but his direct antagonism was reserved for France. The free hand England had allowed her on the northwest coast of Africa was thus doubly an affront to his ambitious soul; and in 1905 he announced his high displeasure by a dramatic coup. Landing from his yacht on the Moroccan seaboard, he promised the natives to safeguard their threatened freedom. France boiled at the insult; but, not daring to make war, she submitted the question to a Conference of the Powers which, largely thanks to Roosevelt, the American President, was convened at Algeciras. The verdict given was a compromise. The Moroccans' liberty was guaranteed; but France was permitted to police their towns. The Kaiser was disappointed; but six years later he returned to the attack. On the plea of suppressing unrest among the natives, the French had occupied the town of Fez. The counter-stroke was startling. A German gunboat was ordered to put in at Agadir as an avowed preliminary to making it a German naval base. France alone was scarcely able to withstand the threat; but on this occasion Great Britain took her part. Her Grand Fleet was put in readiness; and only the unwillingness of either side to fight availed to bring the issue to a peaceful settlement. Thus once again the Kaiser had been foiled; and in Africa at any rate his Imperial aspirations had suffered a rude check. But there are other countries in the world than

Africa; and already for some time an alternative outlet for German enterprise had been in contemplation.

The Kaiser and the Near East.—Nothing perhaps has given more amazing proof of the German nation's energy than the rapid extension of their foreign trade. Within a few years the Fatherland had been developed from an agricultural country into a throbbing hive of manufacture. Cheap products "made in Germany" flooded the world's markets. German merchantmen and liners thronged the seas; and the vigorous enterprise of German agents pushed trade in every continent. One special sphere of activity, however, attracted the eye of their ever-watchful Government. While Africa engrossed the other Powers' attention, the Middle East had hitherto been scarcely broached. Yet Mesopotamia was a fertile field for commercial exploitation; and the only serious bar to its development was the conservative habit of the Turk. To win the Turk's approval was, therefore, among the Kaiser's most dearly cherished schemes. In the first year of his reign he had visited the Sultan. He visited him again in 1898; took an official tour through Palestine; made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem itself; and then astounded Christendom by proclaiming in loud tones his eternal friendship for the Mussulman. The way being thus prepared, the scheme was launched. A railway was projected across Asia Minor, through the Taurus mountains, to the city of Bagdad. The Turk was willing; and grand prospects opened out—of wealth to be gotten from the fertile plains, of bases to be established on the Persian Gulf, and eventually perhaps of a bid for British India and a challenge to England's whole Empire in the East. Meanwhile in Europe all favoured the design. Ferdinand, King of Bulgaria, was a German born; and he gladly allowed free passage through his country to the trunk route connecting Constantinople and Berlin. Austria, for her part, was assisting in the project. The extension of her influence among the Balkan States was for her no novel policy; she had long kept a jealous eye upon these weak and helpless neighbours; and in 1908, to the dismay of Serbia, she had annexed Herzegovina and Bosnia at a blow. Who next would be her victim was not difficult to guess; for the Kaiser was behind her and his aim was pretty clear. The "Germanization" of the Balkans was, in fact, as essential part of the general "eastward push"; and upon this very issue, as we know to-day, hung the fate not of a railway nor of a few small States, but of the world itself.

German Militarism.—Had the Kaiser's high ambitions been pursued by peaceful methods, it would be hard to condemn them as wholly illegitimate; but that was not his way. He always thought, and more often than not talked, in terms of armaments and wars. His Germany stood forth as a competitor for power arrayed in "shining armour." His diplomatic coups were never veiled in decent cunning; they were blatant demonstrations of the might of the "mailed fist." Nor was this braggart talk mere empty boasting. Germany, beyond a doubt, was strong for war. Her army, since its celebrated triumph over France,

was admittedly the finest in the world; and it did not stand alone. For side by side with it the Kaiser had built up a formidable fleet. The defence of German commerce was the motive he alleged; but, such pretences notwithstanding, it was clear that his real objective lay outside the North Sea and that the growing German Navy was a challenge to that of England. Kindred preparations were meantime pushed on apace. Heligoland, which England had captured in the Napoleonic wars, but restored to its natural owners by Lord Salisbury in 1890, was rapidly converted into a fort of monstrous strength. Hard by, through the neck of Schleswig-Holstein, was dug the Kiel Canal, which, when completed, would allow the Kaiser's battleships to concentrate at will in the North Sea or the Baltic. By now, moreover, the number of those ships was no longer insignificant; and there were more to come. When England built the Dreadnought in 1906,¹ the German Admiralty was not slow to follow suit; and the programme of construction aimed at three and thirty ironclads to be launched by 1912.

Such schemes, in addition to the upkeep of their army, cost the German people dear; but they bore the heavy burden with a cheerful pride. Bismarck had taught them to believe in "blood and iron"; and under the Kaiser's influence the militarist spirit had taken deeper root. The protest of Socialists and Liberals availed nothing; the electoral system (as was explained above) gave little chance in Parliament to the people's representatives; and the aristocratic "Junkers," whose position was dependent on the Crown's supremacy, backed their beloved Emperor's policy through thick and thin. So the militarist ideal caught the nation in its grip. The past record of German prowess was extolled with giddy fervour; history was distorted to prove that might was right; and the children in the schools were brought up to the refrain of "Deutschland über Alles." The discipline of the army, in which all German manhood served its apprenticeship to war, was gradually strengthened. The military caste of well-born officers grew every year more arrogant; they would shoulder even women off the pavements where they strutted; and when a young lieutenant cut down a mere civilian for laughing at his antics, the higher authorities applauded and condoned. It was clear, in short, that, if the Kaiser talked of using the "mailed fist," there was a terrible reality behind the threat. We have come now to think of war as an almost unqualified disaster; but to the majority of Germans it was then the very goal and summit of life's purpose and the only true adventure which could call forth the best qualities in man. They believed that struggle was the very salt of life; and many, looking forward to the inevitable conflict which should prick the empty bubble of the British world-supremacy, made sure that German hardihood would outmatch the degenerate foe, and toasted with enthusiasm the coming of "the Day."

¹ The reorganization and strengthening of the British Navy during these years was due mainly to the genius and energy of Lord Fisher.

Tension Grows.—To neighbouring Powers, meanwhile, these noisy preparations were the cause of sincere and justifiable alarm. France, in particular, lived in a constant panic. Her recovery from the defeat of 1870 had been slow. Internal dissensions between Republicans and Royalists, the factious agitations of anti-clerical reformers, and the unsavoury intrigues of powerful Jewish financiers had kept her perpetually upon the rack; while Bismarck's skilful shepherding of Europe had left her, as England saw, without a friend. Once Bismarck was removed, however, she was quick to seize her chance. In 1894 she made a bid for Russian sympathy; and shortly after a regular alliance was struck up between the two. But this was not enough. French nerves were still disquieted; and towards England also a feeler was thrust out. British traditional policy of isolation, begun by Canning in pre-Victorian days, was, of course, the most serious obstacle to a definite understanding between England and France. England had no desire to be entangled in her quarrels; and for various reasons, as has been shown above, British sympathies lay rather with the German than with her. But the events of the Boer war awoke England to a sense of her own military weakness and of the growing hostility displayed beyond the Rhine.

Alarmed by the German menace, King Edward undertook a complete reversal of previous foreign policy. The fruit of his diplomatic efforts was the Franco-British "Entente" of 1904; and, although no pledge was given that England's army would be sent to fight abroad, yet morally at least she was henceforward bound to stand against Germany with France. Apart from this, however, England's attitude was undeniably pacific. Lord Roberts' appeal for a modified conscription was treated with contempt. To the speeding-up of the German naval programme England replied with a suggestion for restricted armaments. But as well might she have spoken to the winds. For the Germans in their turn were growing nervous. With Russia on the east of them, with France upon the west, and with England, as it were, astride the seas, they felt themselves encircled by a ring of enemies and suspected a deliberate conspiracy of the Powers to crush their rising strength. So their war-like preparations were redoubled; and a tense atmosphere of scarcely veiled hostility crept over the whole continent. If the "Triple Entente" between England, France, and Russia had been the outcome of an honest apprehension, the Powers of the "Triple Alliance" (or, since Italy was lukewarm, the two more powerful of them) were scarcely less convinced that an attack on them was brewing, and that their preparations were required in self-defence. At each fresh crisis of international dissension, the omens became more and more alarming. The blood of France was up. She had never quite forgotten her old longing for revenge; and the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, her two precious Rhineland provinces, still rankled. After the German Emperor's coup at Agadir, when the world's peace for a moment had hung trembling in the balance, she was more alarmed than ever; and in 1913 she resolved

on a new measure of precaution. A sudden blow was what she feared; and, to multiply the forces which should be ready to receive it, she now extended the period of her conscripts' service from two years into three, thus increasing the number of those under the colours by one half. Simultaneously the Kaiser made additions to his army; and so the frenzied race ran on. Efforts were made by Mr. Asquith's Government to arrive at some more friendly understanding; and even in Germany there were many who refused to believe in the necessity of war. One thing is certain; their voice was never heard or, if heard, was disregarded at the Kaiser's council board. Even had he himself desired, it was too late to draw back now. The mad part he had enacted he must play through to the end; and, under the strong manipulation of the men whose creed was war and whose whole career had been devoted to war's preparation, the Kaiser now made ready to ring up the curtain on the last, awful scene of Europe's tragedy.

Serajevo to the Fourth of August.—Given that a quarrel was somewhere to be picked, it was not difficult in 1914 to choose the spot. During recent years, as in others more remote, the Balkan States had been the storm-centre of Europe. Since their emancipation from the Sultan's yoke, these States had not grown less bellicose nor more friendly to the Turk; and towards the end of 1912 they had all fallen in a body on their old oppressor and compelled him to disgorge almost all the territory he still possessed this side the Bosphorus. That done, they fell to quarrelling over the division of the spoils; and in a second war which followed Greece, Serbia, Turkey herself, and eventually Rumania too, combined for the undoing of Bulgaria. Now to the two Central Powers at any rate all this was most unwelcome; and the defeat of their friend the Turk, closely followed by the humiliation of Bulgaria and her pro-German King, was a distinct set-back to their own Balkan plans. Austria, acting largely on instructions from Berlin, was still pursuing the old aim of extending her influence towards the south; and there could be no more serious obstacle to her design than an enlarged and powerful Serbia. For Serbia was no willing tool to Austria's policy; on the contrary, she had bitterly resented within the last few years the seizure of Herzegovina and Bosnia; and the alienation of these two kindred Slav communities she still regarded as a blight on her own national ambitions. She may or may not have entertained some hope of their recovery; but it was not long before a malicious fate gave the Austrians some chance of pretending that she did.

About the midsummer of 1914 the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Emperor's throne, was paying Bosnia an official visitation, when at Serajevo—a name now of evil memory—he was shot dead in the open street by a political assassin. With more subtlety than justice, the Austrian Government at once declared that the criminal was the agent of a Serbian plot and called upon the Serbian authorities to expiate the deed. The unworthy implication was vehemently denied; but, knowing she could count upon vigorous German backing, Austria was

not to be put off, and she presented Serbia with an ultimatum the terms of which meant nothing less than absolute subjection. Forty-eight hours were given for an answer; though even within that time the greater part of her demands were yielded, Austria declared war on 25 July. Thus pressed, the Serbs appealed to their old champion, Russia; and Russia, fearing the worst, began to mobilize. It was a fatal though doubtless a necessary step. Germany, though in fact far more prepared than Russia, cried out that she was threatened. A hurried duel of diplomatic fencing then ensued, Berlin, the secret prompter of the Austrian ultimatum, posing throughout as an injured innocent, yet all the while refusing to take a single step towards delay or compromise. All invitations to a Conference of Powers were ignored or else declined; and, while publicly professing their desire to stop the conflict, the German authorities were secretly engaged in egging Austria on. Such tactics could lead only to one end; and, though a state of war was not actually declared till the opening days of August, the mobilization of the German, Austrian, French, and Russian armies precluded all prospect of a bloodless settlement. Italy, maintaining that this at least was no "defensive" war, refused to be bound by the terms of her alliance and held sullenly aloof.

All eyes now turned to watch the attitude of England. Few men doubted in their hearts that she was bound to stand by France; yet the precise nature of her obligations remained a mystery. The Liberal Cabinet was resolved to keep the peace at almost any price; and Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Minister, though rebuffed in all his efforts at conciliation and himself by now convinced of Germany's bad faith, was still without such proof as might convince the doubters that England could not stand aside.¹ Then on a sudden, with that curious knack they have of completely misunderstanding the Englishman's psychology, the Germans themselves committed the one act which was certain to arouse the British. They called on the Belgian Government to give passage for their troops. Now about eighty years before, as the reader will remember, the various Powers of Europe had pledged their solemn word to observe and to preserve the neutrality of Belgium. In 1870 that pledge had again been ratified; yet to Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, considerations of strategy now bulked more large than the maintenance of honour; and, declaring that "necessity should know no law," he spurned the historic document which his countrymen had signed, as an obsolete, unmeaning "scrap of paper." That was enough; the wavering of England ended sharply; and from midnight of the 4th of August she also was at war. That England had entered the arena with clean hands and for the just vindication of an ancient pledge flattered not a little the sentimental side of her people's character. Belgium,

¹ Sir Edward Grey was in a difficult dilemma. He did not wish, of course, to desert France at her need; but he was conscious that a promise of support might make France and Russia more determined upon war and so might diminish the chances of peace.

it was felt, had deserved well of Europe in standing by her duty; and to champion her distress was no less a chivalrous than a legitimate undertaking. Yet, truth to tell, England could have had no choice. No hostile Power has ever held, nor could hold, the opposing Flanders coast without grave prejudice to her national security. Whether or no the majority of Englishmen were conscious of the fact, a challenge had been offered which something more than the obligations of England's honour compelled her to accept; and from the very first moment that she entered on the four years' struggle, nothing less than the Empire's existence was at stake. Yet, strange as it may seem, her act inspired in the Germans a wild ecstasy of hatred: they had counted on the benevolent neutrality of England, and—England (so they verily believed) had played them false!

CHAPTER XVII

THE GREAT WAR

The German Advance.—The advantage of a preparation secretly conducted through none knows how many years, the immense superiority of their initial concentration, outnumbering the French by nearly three to two, above all, perhaps, the military tradition which had taught their generals to lay plans before all else for a swift and crushing blow—these were factors which made it well-nigh certain that the offensive would come from the enemy and that it would come in the west. Well knowing that many months must pass before Russia's millions could be brought into the field, and confident meanwhile of holding her easily in play, the German High Command had very naturally determined to throw the full weight of their attack on France. So much indeed might have been shrewdly guessed beforehand; yet secrecy in warfare is nine points of strategy; and until the last moment it remained in doubt at what precise point the main thrust would be delivered. It might, on the one hand, fall, as it had fallen in the 1870 campaign, somewhere along the true Franco-German frontier, between the Ardennes of Belgium and the southern limit of the Vosges. There, as was obvious, the German forces could be mobilized in the closest proximity to their objective; but there too, not wishing to be caught a second time, the French had prudently constructed a long line of powerful forts, heavily gunned and armoured in the modern fashion, from Verdun to Belfort. To force a way through these would be at best a perilous and lengthy business; and, if the Germans therefore should decline the task, there remained a second alternative, opened to them by their deliberate departure from their treaty pledge, of a flank attack through Belgium. There, in the north, where their frontier marched with Flanders, the French possessed no true defensive line. Such fortresses as they had built were feeble. Natural barrier, whether of river or of mountain, there was none. They had

therefore to decide between massing to meet the Germans in this quarter, while leaving the east frontier mainly to the protection of the forts, or the more risky alternative of making doubly sure of the east frontier and treating the threat through Belgium as mere bluff. Their decision, as the sequel proved, was wrong; and, while they were conducting two misconceived offensives among the Saar valleys¹ and in the lowlands of Alsace, which cost them heavy casualties without compensating gain, the Germans were gathering in overwhelming numbers upon the ill-protected frontier of the north. A slight check indeed they there encountered in the heroic resistance of the Belgians at Liège; but, though they failed to rush the fortress, a siege-artillery of unprecedented power soon battered it to pieces. Namur, a second stronghold, fell more quickly. The Belgian Army was driven back on Antwerp. The Belgian people were cowed into submission by a calculated policy of stern repressive measures; and, over the level plains where harvest was still gathering, the German host, like some monstrous piece of mechanism, accurate in movement, irresistible in numbers, swept southward upon France.

The Battle of the Marne.—This initial miscalculation on the Allies' part was worse than a disaster, it was almost fatal. To stem the onrush for more than a bare moment was wholly beyond the power of the inadequate contingents which the French had posted on the Sambre; and Joffre, their *generalissimo*, had little choice but to order a retreat of the whole northern line. The extreme left of that long line, at Mons, was held by the British Expeditionary Force of five² regular divisions under General Sir John French; and upon them, as was incidental to the post they occupied, fell the most arduous rôle in that memorable retirement. The German sweep drove down at a tremendous pace and in overpowering numbers; and to escape the instant threat of their envelopment the English army was compelled to show swift heels. Heroic feats of marching were accomplished. Under the scorching suns and steady moons of that high August the British raced grimly southward, staggering under their packs, blistered by the hard French *pavées*, blinded with the dust, without sleep for days together, often without food. Regiments lost touch; divisions were parted; and panic-stricken journalists wrote home that all was over. But they were wrong. The marvellous discipline of England's professional soldiers survived that most searching of all tests. The line was nowhere enveloped nor permanently severed. Rearguard actions were successfully maintained and more than once—notably at Le Cateau, where Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien took the hazard on his own responsibility—England turned on her pursuers and obtained some respite by the blows she struck. At length below the River Marne, some twenty miles east of Paris, the British halted, sorely shaken, exhausted, but intact. At the same moment the French line, which had fallen back along with the British, had equally

¹ This offensive did indeed aim at breaking in upon the German bases (such as Metz) and thus obstructing the enemy's liberty of attack.

² The Sixth Division joined them at Le Cateau during the retreat.

received Joffre's orders to stand fast; and at that same moment also the Germans committed the great blunder which saved the Allies and ruined them.

That horn of their wide sweep which was attempting to envelop the British was commanded by a capable commander named von Kluck. Hitherto he had been reaching continuously south-westwards in the effort at encirclement; but, confronted as he now was with the fortress works of Paris which afforded timely shelter to the British threatened flank, he desisted from the effort and with singular audacity changed the

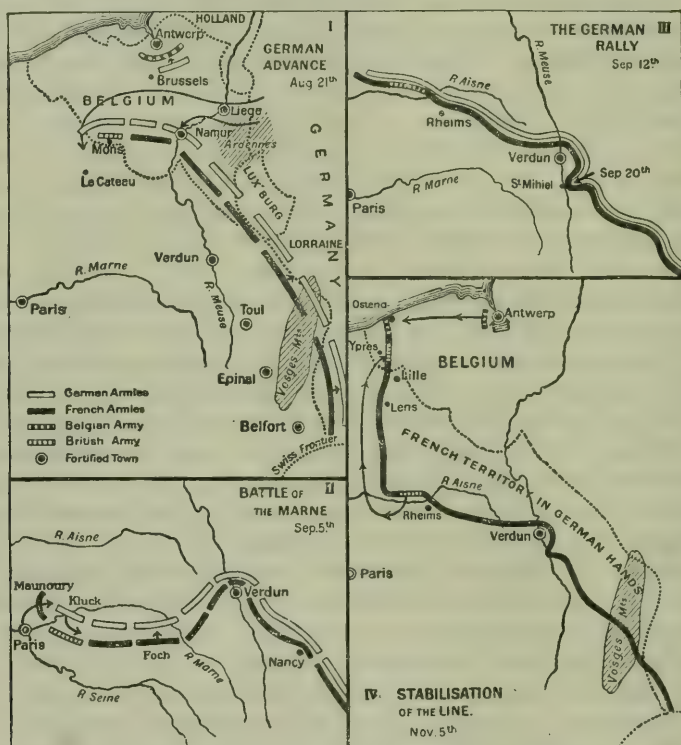


FIG. 55.—THE AUTUMN CAMPAIGN OF 1914.

whole direction of his march. Assuming that in its demoralized condition the force he had pursued might be ignored, he swerved away from Paris and passing southeast along the British front struck down towards the French left flank, feeling for the gap between their line and their own. But he was in double error. Not merely was there fight still left in the British contingent; but the French line was far more strong than he supposed.¹ By thinning his line at less vulnerable points, Joffre

¹ The Germans knew, of course, the approximate strength of the French armies; but they did not know their actual dispositions. In particular they were led astray by the magnificent defence of Nancy, which was held against a strong attack by a comparatively small French force.

had now been able to form a considerable reserve. This newly formed army was being kept against the moment for which his counter-stroke was timed; and that moment at last had come. The centre which to Kluck appeared so vulnerable was reinforced by Foch. Out of Paris, and so close upon Kluck's rear, issued Maunoury's new army, the very existence of which was till now quite unsuspected, and which was ably supported by General Gallieni, commander of the Paris defences. Kluck was caught in an awkward situation. Threatened in his turn by Maunoury's envelopment, he turned upon his tracks to beat it back. In this he was successful; but by his swift return he had in fact degarnished the German centre, leaving thin places where the French might penetrate. Foch, with rare instinct, divined the opportunity. Joffre had given the order to attack; and, after the long discouragement of their enforced retreat, the French hailed the chance with rapture. Not an inch of ground did they yield further, but grappled to the enemy like grim death.

Three days the battle swayed. On the fourth, Foch found his breach; and then with a final thrust the French were through. Pierced at this vital point, the German front collapsed; and they began to scuttle northward for dear life. After them pell-mell went the victorious allied line. Sir John French and his men recrossed the River Marne; and the pursuer now was in his turn pursued. At one moment it appeared as though von Kluck might be outflanked; but his men fighting cleverly and stoutly a series of rear-guard actions, escaped from Maunoury's clutches; and, although with great loss of men and guns, made good their passage of the River Aisne. On the north bank of that river they ensconced themselves in a strong entrenched position, which, neglecting no precaution even at the height of their success, their sappers had meanwhile been busily constructing. Against this the Allies' pursuit broke ineffectual, and, although they crossed the river, they were held. Hitherto, through three weeks of open warfare, the battle-line had been in a constant state of flux; now, however, as first the Germans, then the Allies went to ground, it crystallized into a permanent trench system. Passing along the heights which overlook the Aisne, it skirted the north of Rheims and ran east towards Verdun; then bending sharply round that fortress it set south along the Vosges and through Alsace, till the Swiss frontier brought it to an end. This line—two arms as one might say, of an inverted L—remained to all intents and purposes unaltered during the next four years of fighting; and thus, although at the Marne France had parried successfully the blow which would else have reached her vitals, the instrument which dealt it was left, as it were, still embedded deeply in her side. For behind the Germans' battle-line—hostage, so to speak, of their initial victory—lay a huge cantle of French soil. It was a cruel wound, not merely because so many thousand Frenchmen were thus left at the mercy of an inhuman conqueror, but also because within the captured area was comprised not the least important of the French industrial districts. The inevitable loss of many

mines and factories in the populous neighbourhoods of Lille and Lens severely crippled, though it did not incapacitate, the munitioning activities of France. That was the price she paid for early failure.

The Battle of Ypres.—The first phase—the phase of Open warfare—was now over; but, though the battle-front was stabilized when it reached the River Aisne, it was not complete until it should reach the sea. In the second phase this gap, a full hundred miles in breadth, was waiting to be bridged; and upon the outcome of this phase hung many vital issues, not least the fate of the precious Channel ports. From the first it was a race in reinforcements. Whichever side could anticipate the other in bringing fresh men into the field would inevitably outflank and so bend back the opposing battle-line. With the advantage of their shorter and (what perhaps mattered more) undamaged communications, the Allies had the better of the race, and were thus enabled to direct the lengthening line continuously northwards. As other sections of the front were duly trenched, it became possible to man them with inferior numbers, and the men thus spared were rapidly transported to the more critical scene of action in the north. The climax of this method of reinforcements was the wholesale transference of the entire British Army from its post in the Aisne Valley to the Franco-Belgian border. By the middle of October the British were setting foot for the second time on Belgian soil. It was not much of Belgium, however, that they were able to recover; and about this very moment, what was left of its own defenders stood in imminent peril of complete reduction.

The Belgian Army, as we saw above, had fallen back in August upon Antwerp. There they held on until after the Marne battle the Germans undertook to press the siege in earnest. Huge guns were brought to bear upon the outer forts and shattered them to ruins. The town itself was soon in flames; and only by swift retreat, while an exit still remained to them, did the surviving Belgian forces escape capture. Under the sheltering rear-guard of the British Seventh Division, transported from England expressly for the purpose, they were brought in safety to the Flemish coast; and with their coming the extension of England's battle-front from the Aisne valley to the sea was finally completed. But, though complete, the British line had still to prove that it could hold. At points indeed it was perilously thin; and, when in late October the enemy determined to break through and win the Channel ports, the chances of repelling him seemed small. Round Ypres, to which the British clung for sentimental reasons, a three weeks' battle raged. More than once the Germans were within a touch of victory; but the English army hung grimly on—sheltered in water-logged, unwholesome trenches, deluged with shell-fire to which they could scarcely answer, seldom relieved for days and days together, and subjected all this while to massed assaults of increasing German numbers. It was a miracle they held; but hold they did; and at length the foe desisted. Winter drew on; and both sides settled down to endure

the miseries and improvise the tactics of a novel type of war. The trenches, often but a few score yards apart, were divided only by the wire entanglements set up by either side. Mortars and machine guns kept up short range bombardments. Howitzers and the rest played havoc from the rear; and meanwhile the wretched victims of this two-fold devilry stood up to their waists in water day and night, scanning the mists for a sign of creeping figures or piling sand-bags on the broken breastworks beneath which rotting corpses lay. Holding as they did the higher ground, the Germans enjoyed a physical advantage; and in every type of munition and equipment they outmatched the British completely. For three following winters the same terrible ordeal lay before the British soldiers; and, though to some extent England soon made good her mechanical deficiency, yet it was a long and weary while—ininitely weary to the impatient soldiers—before she drew level with the scientific thoroughness of her opponents. In one respect, indeed, they could boast of an advantage which we need not envy them. The Germans were prepared to be unscrupulous in their tactics, and even decided upon the use of poisoned gas. Had they realized its value to the full, they might have broken the British line. As it was, they crossed it on a small front north of Ypres. They failed, however, to push home their first success; and the sight of their tortured victims, livid from choking lungs, roused in the British such spirit as no failure or discouragement could quench. For now at least England came to realize, if she did not so before, with what manner of foe it was she had to deal.

II. RUSSIA, GALLIPOLI, AND OTHER EASTERN THEATRES

Russia's Weakness.—If in the West their hope of a swift decision had thus been falsified, the Germans' confidence in the safety of their eastern frontier was better founded. For, though the rapidity of Russia's early strokes upset their calculations, she was not able to maintain the pace; and their low estimate of her capacity proved substantially correct. To the uninstructed British public, on the other hand, "the Russian steam-roller" appeared a tower of strength; and they foolishly looked forward to seeing the Tsar's hosts advance slowly, but surely, on Berlin. It was a pure illusion. Russia's weakness had already been displayed ten years before in her war against Japan; and, although since then she had reorganized her army, its radical defects had not been changed. Her human resources, it is true, are almost limitless. Given time, she could well raise 10,000,000 men or more; and these, though inferior to the German in intelligence and training, were magnificent material, endowed with a courage unsurpassed by any people, half-fatalistic (for there is much of the Oriental in the Russian character), half-born of a childlike faith in their religion and their Tsar.

But wars in the twentieth century are not fought with men alone; and in every type of mechanical equipment the Russian Army was far

behind the times. There were not even rifles sufficient to go round; and often men were marched unarmed into a battle to await their turn with a rifle when some comrade should be killed. Their losses were appalling; for the German artillery mowed them down by thousands; and it was too seldom that their own could effectively reply. Munition factories of a sort they did indeed possess; but theirs is not by

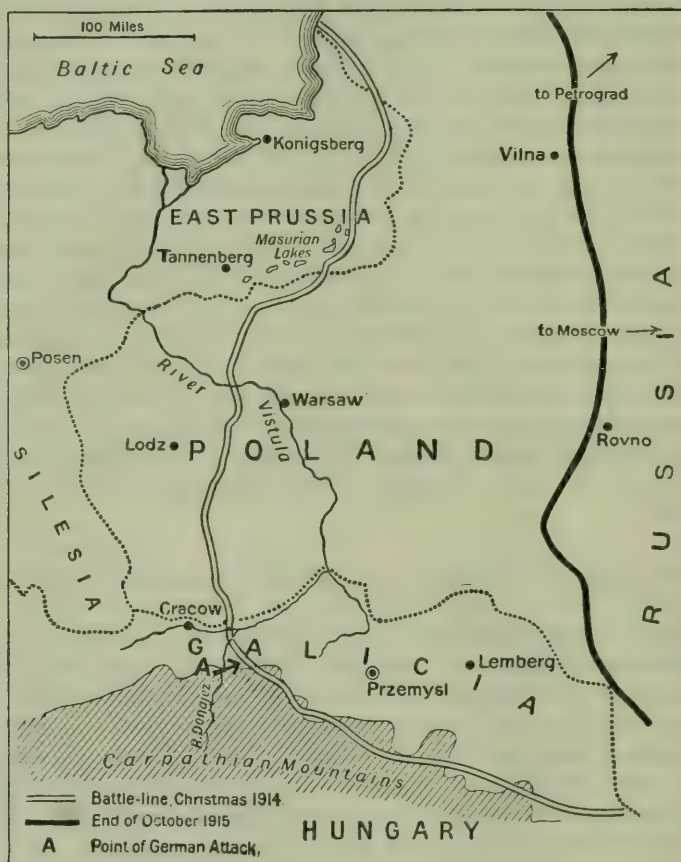


FIG. 56.—MAP OF THE RUSSIAN FRONT.

nature an industrial country; and the supply of guns and shells fell lamentably short. Worse still, the intrigues of traitors and the corruption of officials were a constant hindrance to the commanders at the front. These, luckily, were men of sterling character; and the Grand Duke Nicholas, their *generalissimo*, was no mean strategist. His first blow, struck at the earliest possible moment to relieve the heavy pressure upon France, was an invasion of East Prussia. This province, which protrudes between Poland and the Baltic, was particularly

precious to the Germans for the grain supplies it furnished; and when into it burst Rennenkampf, the Cossack leader, driving before him the scared inhabitants and leaving behind him a trail of gutted villages and blazing stacks, there arose wild panic throughout Eastern Germany.

The German Drive.—The raid achieved its purpose in checking the flow of German reinforcements to the critical battle-ground in France; but its success was brief. In the marshy neighbourhood of the Masurian Lakes part of the Russian Army was waylaid by the veteran Hindenburg, who knew the district well and made a skilful use of its strategic railroads. They were enveloped at Tannenberg and perished almost to a man. For the moment Eastern Germany was saved; but this disaster notwithstanding, the Grand Duke continued his offensive strategy. Using Warsaw as his centre, he was soon pushing westwards in a far-flung sweep. By now, however, the enemy's resistance had begun to stiffen; and, as the campaign approached the German border and the important district of the Silesian mine-fields, the Russians were first held and then thrown back.

Meanwhile in the south, better fortune had attended their invasion of the Austrian province of Galicia. The Austrian Army, drawn as it largely was from the Empire's disaffected subject peoples, and officered by a callous, inefficient aristocracy, showed no great stomach for resisting them. They overran Galicia, captured after a siege the great fortress of Przemyśl, and even topped the crest of the Carpathian mountains, beyond which lay the fertile granary of the Hungarian plains. Such a threat to the supplies of their confederate brought the Germans to her aid. They reorganized the Austrian Army, stiffened it with regiments of their own, and in the early summer of 1915 undertook a bold offensive in Galicia, not merely for the purpose of recovering that province, but in the hope of breaking Russia once for all. Secretly massing a huge park of field artillery and placing their own crack general, von Mackensen, in command, they sprang a great surprise. The deluge of their shells blotted out an entire sector of the front; and, driving through the gap, they turned the whole Russian line to north of them. Every foot of ground was stubbornly contested; but the German onslaught was not stayed. In August they entered Warsaw; then for mile after bleak mile pushed forward across Poland till by autumn the Russian frontier proper had been crossed. There is a limit, however, even to the most spectacular advances; and, though to reach Petrograd or Moscow seemed not impossible, yet the memory of Napoleon's fate was a warning against so ambitious an excursion; and eventually a halt was called on the line of Vilna-Rovno. The summer's campaign had been a marvellous triumph and the joy-bells were still ringing in Berlin. But, though the Russian Army had been beaten in perhaps a score of battles and driven back more than two hundred miles, its front was still continuous; and there was fight left in it yet. Thus, after all, what the Germans had set out to do they had not done. 1915 was drawing to a close; and the *decision* which

the War's first year denied them in the west, the second year had now denied them in the east as well.

Landings on Gallipoli.—To the Allies, however, this was a scanty comfort. The "steam-roller" had rolled, but, contrary to prediction, had rolled back; and it needed no great perspicacity to see the reason why. Lack of ammunition was the root cause of Russia's trouble—so much her friends had long since understood—but how to get it to her had been an awkward question, more difficult to solve. The Baltic was blocked by German battleships and minefields. Archangel on the northern coast was free from ice only in summer months. There remained the Dardanelles, and here most unhappily the Turks were across the way. Even before the War, as we have said, their sympathies had leant towards Germany; in the first days, and while still strictly neutrals, they had given shelter to her two men-of-war, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, which had eluded British pursuit. The presence of these battleships had applied the needful spur to their irresolution; and they had taken the fateful plunge. If, therefore, the Allies were to unlock the Dardanelles and get at Russia, it would have to be against the resistance of the Turk. Nor was this by any means an easy proposition. The Straits are by nature strong; and under the supervision of German officers, lent for the purpose several years before, their defences had been brought well up to date. There were those, however, among England's naval strategists who had been much impressed by the collapse of Belgian fortresses under the fire of modern guns; they believed that the broadsides of powerful battleships would have similar success; and, since no land forces were then available for a joint operation, they determined very early in 1915 to attempt to force the Straits with ships alone.

The result was a lamentable failure. The forts at the entrance were silenced, it is true, and the Franco-British fleet got some four miles up the Channel; but the fire of the concealed batteries on either side the Narrows, and the danger of floating mines which drifted down the current, compelled them to fall back with the loss of three large ships. In one sense it was worse than a failure; it was an unpardonable blunder; for it gave the Turks a warning of Allied plans. The Gallipoli peninsula was strengthened with wire entanglements, and its garrison largely increased under the command of German officers; and, when five weeks later Sir Ian Hamilton arrived at Lemnos with a fleet of transports and 120,000 men aboard, it was evident to all that the hazards of a landing had in the interval been multiplied tenfold. The enterprise which followed was among the most audacious and most tragic of all time. The Turks are magnificent defensive fighters; and that the British should ever have succeeded in setting foot upon Gallipoli remains a standing marvel. Many feint attacks were planned at various points to divert the Turks' attention; but at two points, in particular, England meant to seize the shore, and she succeeded. Australians and New Zealanders rushed a small bay or inlet on the southwest coast, which

came to be known from their corps' initial letters as the "Anzac" Cove. British regiments, meanwhile, were conveyed in boats and barges to Cape Helles at the tip of the peninsula. The Turks, who were perfectly prepared for their arrival, poured in a hail of shot. Despite of it, however, the boats were driven on the beaches, the British swarmed over, and a precarious footing was won. Yet they lost, perhaps, half their number in the doing of it, and the survivors, crouching under the shelter of low sandhills, seemed doomed to death or capture. Nevertheless, they not merely held their footing, but advanced inland in the teeth of Turkish fire. By dint of costly rushes, aided by the curtain fire of the battleships behind, they crept up the southern tip of the penin-



FIG. 57.—GALLIPOLI, PALESTINE AND MESOPOTAMIA.

sula, until they had occupied a tongue of land over two miles in depth. But farther they could not go. The heights of Achi Baba, their immediate objective before the further heights could be won, defied every effort to advance; and for weeks a hopeless, though heroic struggle was maintained without result. The horror of the British sufferings—the heat, the thirst, the stench, and, perhaps worst of all, the flies—is enough to stagger thought. Fever and dysentery played havoc in the ranks; and the sick or wounded could not be got away except under cover of the night. Yet the effort of the British was never once relaxed; and in daring raids or skilful sniping the Turk soon found his match.

Suvla Landing and Evacuation.—In August the long-awaited reinforcements at length arrived from England; and Sir Ian Hamilton

essayed a second stroke. The fresh troops were put ashore at Anzac and somewhat higher up the western coast at Suvla Bay. Opposite the new landing stood a range of heights, and most conspicuous among them the scrub covered slopes of Sari Bair. If this were captured the British would be able from its crest to sweep the Turks down into the sea, or at the very least to win the observation posts vital to the successful bombardment of the fortresses which lined the Straits; and so completely did the landing take the enemy by surprise that at one moment its capture seemed accomplished. The forces engaged, however, were mostly untried troops, receiving here, upon this wild and open coast, their baptism of fire. Officers being killed, regiments lost their bearings. Clear orders were not issued or, if issued, went astray; and the success of the first stroke was scarcely grasped. The confusion on the beaches impeded the supplies, which were so sorely needed, from reaching the advance parties on the inland slopes; and, when the Turkish forces at length rallied and their counter-attack came, the British were hurled back off the heights they had so nearly won. To prolong the campaign after this second failure appeared without excuse; but it was not until after Christmas that the final evacuation was achieved.¹ Like the landing, it was a marvellous combination of efficiency and bluff; and the Turks were unaware that the British even thought of going until the morning after they had gone.

Salonica, Suez, and Mesopotamia.—The Gallipoli adventure, however unsuccessful, had at least this much of merit, that it kept the Turkish Army from troubling the Allies elsewhere. Its abandonment, therefore, let loose large enemy forces which had been hitherto pinned down, and caused the Allies equally to dissipate their efforts among many minor theatres of the East. One urgent call upon their sadly strained resources came from Serbia in the autumn of 1915. Hitherto England's gallant Ally had held her own with astonishing success; and on two separate occasions she had bloodily repulsed an Austrian invasion from the north. Now, however, upon her Eastern frontier also she was faced with the attack of a new foe. Since the defeat which he had suffered at her hands in 1913 Ferdinand of Bulgaria had been awaiting his revenge. With the Germans he already had a secret understanding; and, so soon as the Allied failure at Gallipoli seemed proven and he felt there was no danger of an attack upon his rear, he came out upon their side. Thus assailed upon two fronts, Serbia's case was hopeless. First Belgrade, then Nish had in turn to be abandoned, and the diminished army, unable to make much fight of it, retired southwest into the mountains and, after a terrible march among the snow-clad passes, succeeded in reaching the Adriatic coast. The Allies, as so often, were too late to avert the tragedy; and the best that Britain could do—though hesitating long before she did it—was to prevent the important town of Salonica from falling also into Austrian

¹ Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove were evacuated on 20 December; the tip of the Peninsula on 9 January.

hands. This port, from which enemy submarines could have swept the whole Ægean, belonged in reality to Greece. Hence arose a delicate and awkward situation. For Constantine, the King of Greece, had strong pro-German leanings; and he refused downright to give the British leave to land. By a recent treaty, however, Greece was pledged to render help to Serbia, if Serbia were attacked; on the score of this the Allies determined to ignore the protest of the King; and in October a mixed force of French and British went ashore. Its belated effort to assist the retreating Serbs bore no fruit; and the only genuine service which it continued to perform was to occupy the attention of the Bulgar Army and to keep a watch on the ambiguous attitude of Greece. The lines round Salonica were strengthened and enlarged; and, when the



FIG. 58.—THE ITALIAN AND BALKAN FRONTS.

greater part of Allied Gallipoli divisions had been transported thither at the ending of the year, they began to form the nucleus of a formidable army, fit one day to square the reckoning with the foe.

Meantime, as we have said, if the evacuation of Gallipoli set Allied forces free, so equally did it set free large forces of the Turk. This was a serious matter; and to the holders of Egypt and the Canal at Suez—never perhaps more valuable than now—the prospect was a black one. Already in February of 1915 the Turks had made a bid at seizing the canal; and, though easily repulsed, they held the whole of the Sinai peninsula, a most disconcerting menace to England. Luckily, however, the Arabs were against them; and, even if such allies were a weak reed for England to lean on, she decided that an offensive was the best method of defence. Accordingly, in the first months of 1916 she began to push her forces across the trackless desert which divides the Suez isthmus from southern Palestine. A railway was constructed to facilitate supplies. The enemy's attacks were beaten off. The Shereef of

Meece revolted from the Turks; and all for a time went well. But the pace of the British advance was inevitably slow; and, the threat to Palestine being somewhat in the air, the Turks had meanwhile felt free to concentrate their forces on more telling work elsewhere. At the head of the Persian Gulf England possessed before the War an important oil supply which served her fleet. To secure its safety she had lost no time in landing a small force—mainly of Indian regiments—at Basra. Once there the temptation of striking at the Turk had been too strong to be resisted; and General Townshend had marched up the Tigris, defeated a Turkish army in the neighbourhood of Kut, and pressed north towards Bagdad. By the middle of November, 1915, he had reached a point within five-and-twenty miles of the historic town itself. Its capture, which would greatly have enhanced England's prestige throughout the East, seemed hourly imminent; yet already, though as yet she scarcely knew it, she was too late. Part of the Turkish forces, which the failure at Gallipoli had freed, were being hurried east. The railway line, which before the War had been constructed by the Germans to Bagdad, facilitated their arrival; and, though Townshend beat their vanguard in fine style at Ctesiphon, he was compelled the moment after to fall back once more on Kut. Thither he was followed; and for five dreary winter months he was held under close siege. Forces sent up for his relief could make no headway. The Tigris' floods were out; and the Turks now had men in plenty for resistance. At the end of April, after terrible privations heroically borne, the garrison of Kut gave in. Still worse might well have followed but for a timely Russian exploit in an unexpected quarter. The Grand Duke Nicholas, deprived of his high position during the great retreat, had been sent to command the army of the Caucasus; and there he had straightway planned a daring invasion of the Turks' Armenian border. While Kut was still untaken, he had descended through deep snow upon the powerful fortress-town of Erzerum, captured it, and, before the Turks could rally, driven them back along the Black Sea coast as far as Trebizond. This threat to Asia Minor relieved to some extent the pressure on Allied forces in the south; and it showed that, notwithstanding their success in other theatres, the Turks were already feeling the heavy strain of war. They had no choice, indeed, but to fight on; for their German masters would not let them stop. But for them too, though still as yet far distant, the day of reckoning was to come at last.

III. HOPES DEFFERED 1915-16

Italy and the Allied Resources.—Throughout the War there were those (even in high places) who held that to strike at the weakest enemy was the wisest strategy, and that the Allies' best hopes of victory lay therefore in the East. Others held—and, as the issue proved, correctly—that to win the war the Allies must first beat Germany, and

that the road to victory lay therefore in the West. The controversy was to be decided only by events themselves; but among the high command this latter view upon the whole prevailed; and in the spring of 1915, despite the apparent deadlock on the Western front, they had some ground for confidence. To wear down the enemy's resistance would no doubt take time; but if a war of sheer exhaustion was what lay ahead, then the balance of manpower seemed to favour the Allies.

Russia, as has been said, was good for countless millions. France would continue the fight to her last man; and the Allies now had good promise also of a new Ally. Italy showed signs of joining them. Notwithstanding her old alliance with the enemy, she was at heart in sympathy with the democratic cause; all she asked was the assurance that a large share of the Adriatic seaboard should be hers; the Allies' pledge once given on this point, she decided to come in, and in May, 1915, her armies, already mobilized, were launched against the Austrian frontier, with the twofold purpose of capturing Trieste, and of regaining the long-coveted possession of "Italia Irredenta." Thus pressed, it was clear that Austria could spare no reinforcements for the German line in France; and, if Germany herself had men to hold the trenches, the Allies felt sure that, French and British put together, they had more. British reserves—the reserves of a world-empire—were slow no doubt in coming into play; but they were large. The Colonies were arming, ready and eager to take a part in England's war. Native troops had been trans-shipped from India, and were proud to fill the gaps in the hard-pressed line in France. Last, but not least, there were large new armies forming upon British soil itself. Lord Kitchener, when appointed at the outbreak of hostilities to be Secretary for War, had appealed for volunteers; and he had soon got more than the figure which he named. Hundreds of thousands, the pick of the nation's manhood, were under training in improvised camp quarters. After nine or ten months' exercise the raw recruits of the preceding autumn would be fit to take the field. With these welcome reinforcements England would be able during the summer to take over a fresh strip of the French line. Meanwhile with spring the horrors of winter were forgotten; and hopes very naturally ran high.

Neuve Chapelle and Loos.—The campaign on the Western front in 1915 was a one-sided affair. The Germans expended all their energy on the great Russian drive; and, except for the gas attack in the neighbourhood of Ypres, they were content simply to hold their own. The initiative lay therefore, with the Allies; and Sir John French led off in early March with an attack at Neuve Chapelle. The British obliterated the enemy's defences with a lavish expenditure of shells, and entering the gap thus torn they made a mile of ground; then, while they were doubting how to follow up the stroke, the counter-attack came and they were firmly held. In May the French to south of the British were hammering hard towards Lens; but, though they too won some country, they equally were held. After these disappoint-

ments a breathing-space was taken to prepare for an offensive on a more elaborate scale; and on 25 September two great attacks were simultaneously begun, one by the French alone in the rolling Champagne country east of Rheims, the other by French and British armies in conjunction on the old battle-ground of May. The results, though more extensive as measured by mere miles, fell far below the Allies' hopes. For, dent it as they might, the German front held firm; and they were as far as ever from achieving a genuine "break-through." Even if such a thing were possible at all, the problems to be solved

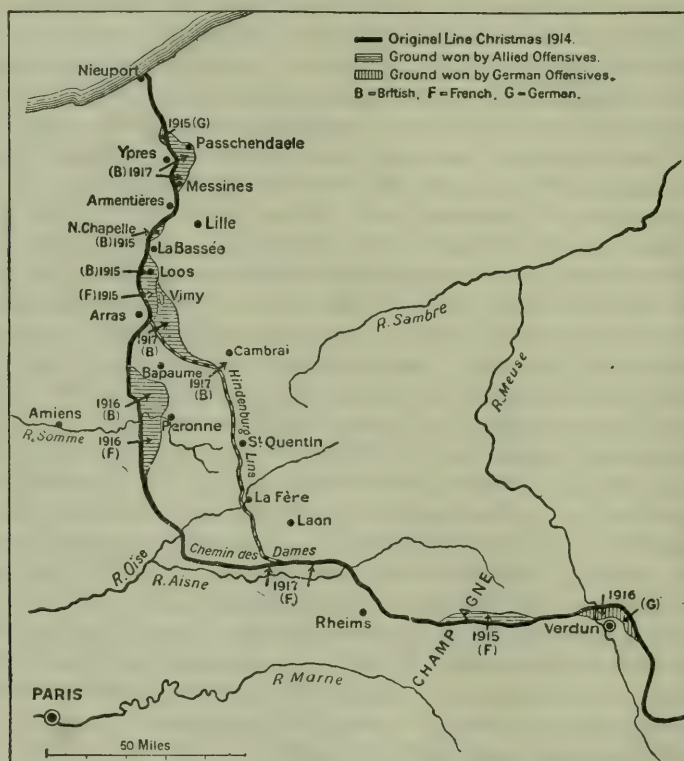


FIG. 59.—THE WESTERN FRONT, 1914-1917.

seemed overwhelming; and how many were the pitfalls few had realised till now. Thus Loos, which was the primary objective of the British attack, they had carried at one rush; but the front attacked was too narrow to admit of a real break through; and, even had the reserves not failed to appear at the right moment, little more could have been achieved. This strategical miscarriage was much criticized at home; and a few months later Sir John French was himself recalled, Sir Douglas Haig being promoted in his place.

But it was not faults of generalship alone which were revealed by this year's failure. After Neuve Chapelle England had come sud-

denly to realise that her supply of high explosive was utterly inadequate. A vigorous Press campaign set the blame upon the War Office; and the Government was urged to step in and set things right. As a result, a new "Ministry of Munitions" was established. Lloyd George, who from Socialist reformer had now become the chief protagonist of ruthless war, was appointed its first head; and soon shell factories were rising, as by magic, in every nook and corner of the land. England, in short, became a monster arsenal; yet she did not for all that intend to be regarded as a mere purveyor of supplies. More men were clearly needed on the Western front, before victory could be won; and to provide them was a duty which could not be burked. Conscription then appeared the obvious course; and, though Mr. Asquith's Cabinet had been hitherto averse to a method so opposed to the Liberal principles of individual freedom, yet without conscription it was difficult to see how more men were to be raised. Mr. Asquith's Cabinet, however, was now, in point of fact, no longer purely Liberal. During the crisis which arose about the lack of ammunition he had called on the Conservatives to join its ranks; the Coalition Ministry thus formed was in a strong position; and, when a few months later the necessity for conscription became so clear, it was able to appeal without prejudice of party to the loyal commonsense of Englishmen. Few voices in fact were raised in opposition when in the course of the winter of 1915-16 compulsory service for all under forty-two was made law by Act of Parliament. For now at any rate the task which lay ahead of England was beginning to be seen in true perspective; and the nation set its teeth.

Verdun and the Somme.—So, despite the discouragements of Kut and Serbia, the failure of Russia and of the Dardanelles campaign, England embarked upon the year 1916 in a new spirit of grim resolve. All her resources "to the last man and the last shilling" were now to be thrown in; and the winter months were devoted to a preparation more elaborate, more scientific, and more soundly planned than heretofore. Lord Kitchener, its director, was unhappily lost in June, the ship which was to carry him to Russia having foundered on a mine; but Sir William Robertson took up the reins and showed clearly from the start that the Army's organization lay in not less able hands.¹ Before this occurred, however, the year's campaign had opened; and this time the initiative was not with the Allies. The first blow came from the enemy. While February snows were still upon the ground, they launched an offensive of unprecedented force against Verdun. To achieve a real "break-through" at so defensible a point was probably beyond their calculation; but by capturing this angle of the French defence they hoped at least to daunt the nation's spirit, and even perhaps, when peace settlements were made, to secure it as a permanent possession. However that may be, they were determined to win Verdun.

¹ Sir W. Robertson was not, like Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, but Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Their preliminary bombardment was on a gigantic scale; and several of the forts which ringed the town were captured by assault. But the French under General Pétain rallied in good time; and, as corps after corps of their assailants swarmed up the battered slopes, they flung them strongly back. So it went on, till there was scarcely a regiment in either army but was brought up in its turn to be thrown into the furnace; and all through the critical weeks of April, May, and June the fortunes of battle swayed.

It was a question now whether the British Army could strike its blow in time to relieve the pressure on the French and save Verdun. It could. On 1 July England launched her grand offensive on the River Somme. For months she had planned and studied the details of its strategy. Nothing now was left to chance. Emplacements had been built for a whole host of powerful guns. These were first to concentrate on the enemy's defences and pound them into dust. Then, as the infantry went forward to occupy the débris, the guns' elevation lifted and a curtain fire preceded the advance. An accurate time-table had been prepared, and every unit knew precisely at what minute to leave cover and at what point to stop. Aeroplanes, fitted with wireless installations, were to give headquarters tidings of the progress at the front. Most wonderful of all in this battle of many wonders, huge, armoured monsters, known for secrecy as "tanks,"¹ crept ponderously forward over ditch and hedge and hillock, nosing out the machine-guns which the artillery had spared and enfilading nests of enemy sharpshooters. No battle in history had ever been conducted on so magnificent a scale; and first and last millions of men took part in it. The British attack was delivered on an enormous front measuring, with that of the adjacent French offensive, full five and twenty miles. The main objective was Bapaume, an important centre of communications in the rear of the enemy's line; but on this occasion there was to be no mad rush to carry all at a blow. Three separate lines of German trenches lay between the British and their goal; and each of these was methodically mastered along the entire front, before an advance was made against the next. At each successive stage, however, a pause for preparation was essential to success. The guns had to be brought up, emplacements built anew; and during the interval—two weeks or more in length—the Germans, who were from the first forewarned of British intentions by the nature of their bombardments, were free to bring up reinforcements and make fresh dispositions for defence. The result was that, by the time the British had pushed up the rolling downland and looked over the crest on to the plains around Bapaume, autumn had overtaken them. November rains still found them on the descending slopes. They had won many miles of country. The British troops had fought with a heroism beyond description and beyond praise. The

¹ Tanks, in point of fact, were first used upon the Somme on 15 September, but in insufficient numbers; and the value of this new arm was largely discounted by its premature disclosure.

continual strain placed upon the defenders of the position had told on their morale; and the English soldiers had taken heavy toll of German lives. Yet who shall say that they had won the battle? For to fail of victory at such a stage was little better than defeat; and, if after the close of it their disillusionment was bitter, there was a worse in store.

Some fifteen miles away behind Bapaume, and cutting across the threatened angle of their front, the Germans had been busy for months past constructing a new line—the “Hindenburg line” as the Allied soldiers christened it—and to this at the end of winter they suddenly withdrew, leaving behind them a broad tract of country which, as they went, they laid waste with a deliberate cunning to hamper and retard the Allied pursuit. Such a retirement appeared perhaps at first to be to the Allies’ advantage; but in reality it was the enemy who scored. It enabled him by the shortening of his line to economize his men; while it imposed on the Allies the arduous necessity of constructing in a wilderness new trenches, new depots of supply, and new communications with the rear. It was a cruel consummation to early hopes; for nothing in warfare is more disconcerting than the sense of being tricked.

Rumania Overrun.—Truth to tell, the Allies were beginning reluctantly to recognize that, in strategy at least, the German was their master. To him the various fronts in east or west were but part of one vast battleground; and, while on the Allied side the operation of each separate army was confined to its own sphere, *his* troops were hurried to the point where they were needed, from France to Serbia or from Galicia to the Somme, with the masterly precision of a single directing mind. In other words, unity of command and the geographical advantage of interior lines enabled his troops, despite their dwindling numbers, still to do double work; and thanks to this they were to achieve in the autumn of 1916 a success which counterbalanced any losses of the year. . . .

That sooner or later the friendly State, Rumania, would range herself upon the Allied side had long been the hope and expectation of British diplomats. She was an old enemy of Austria; and, like Italy, she longed to redeem her fellow-countrymen of Transylvania from the Empire’s alien yoke. For a while she had very naturally been daunted by the sad collapse of Russia; but in the course of this year’s summer the situation on the Eastern front had taken a better turn. Brussiloff, the dashing Russian general, had struck strongly in the south, making great havoc of Austria’s demoralized divisions and taking an enormous haul of willing prisoners. Rumania felt encouraged; and at the end of August she also took the plunge. Great was the satisfaction among Allied nations; but their satisfaction was destined to be brief. Shortly before, as it so happened, there had been drastic changes in the German High Command. Falkenhayn, discredited by the failure of his offensive at Verdun, was superseded by von Hindenburg, the new national favourite and the successful commander of the Eastern front; more important

still, his Chief of Staff and the real directing brain of future operations was a man of very great, if not of supreme genius—Ludendorff. Now to these two new commanders the entry of Rumania came as a golden opportunity of displaying German strength. Though the Somme battle was still raging, several enemy divisions were spared from the French front; and these assailed the new Ally of England and France on her western flank. Simultaneously, Bulgaria threatened her from the south; and, since the promised aid from Russia never came, her doom was quickly sealed. Bucharest, her capital, was in German hands by Christmas; and the battered remnant of the Rumanian Army was driven back and back, until nothing more remained to them than a narrow strip of country along the Russian border in the east. To the Allies, this rapid downfall of their latest friend was a terrible setback. Nothing could have been more damaging to their prestige; and a growing belief in the invincibility of German arms began to take a hold on doubting hearts. Happily, however, those that hoped were more than those that doubted. A German offer of peace was repelled with scornful pride; and, dark as the hour was, the British spirit hardened to the trial. It was a symptom not of despair, but of increasing resolution, that in December public opinion approved the overthrow of Mr. Asquith on the ground that he lacked energy, and hailed with genuine relief the promotion of Lloyd George as one who would fight to the death.

IV. WAR ON THE SEAS

Importance of Sea Power.—At the end, then, of the war's third autumn the outlook was not promising; but pessimists were apt, as is their habit, to look too much upon the surface. Underlying the chequered fortune of the long-drawn struggle there was still one sure foundation for good hope; and, looking deeper, England should have known (what her wars with France had taught her long ago) that, when sea power and land power are confronted, sea power wins. It cannot be too often or too emphatically remembered how essential a foundation not merely of England's victory, but of her very existence as a nation and an empire, was the supremacy of her Navy and its command of the world's seas. From the declaration of war in August, 1914, until the signing of the Armistice just over four years later, this never for one hour or for one minute ceased to be true; and that during all those years, under circumstances far more difficult and trying than ever Hawke or Nelson knew, British admirals and sailors maintained and more than maintained the high tradition of the past—is a matter to thank God on. Their activities were manifold and ubiquitous; for, though France and Italy both helped to share it, the work was mainly England's. Broadly speaking, it fell under two heads. First, she had to defeat or at any rate to immobilize the enemy's North Sea Fleet, thereby securing her own coasts against invasion and gaining incidentally a stranglehold over all the German ports. She had, secondly, to

safeguard, in whatever sea or ocean, the Allied shipping both which carried and supplied her troops and which (equally important) fed the civil populations that would otherwise have starved. So successfully, so silently, and withal so unobtrusively was this twofold task performed that at times it is difficult to remember the magnitude of the burden it imposed.

German and British Raids.—The building up of the German Navy, as we have seen above, had been extraordinarily rapid, and, up to a point, extraordinarily efficient; so that in August, 1914, it was no contemptible rival to that of England. The margin of England's superi-

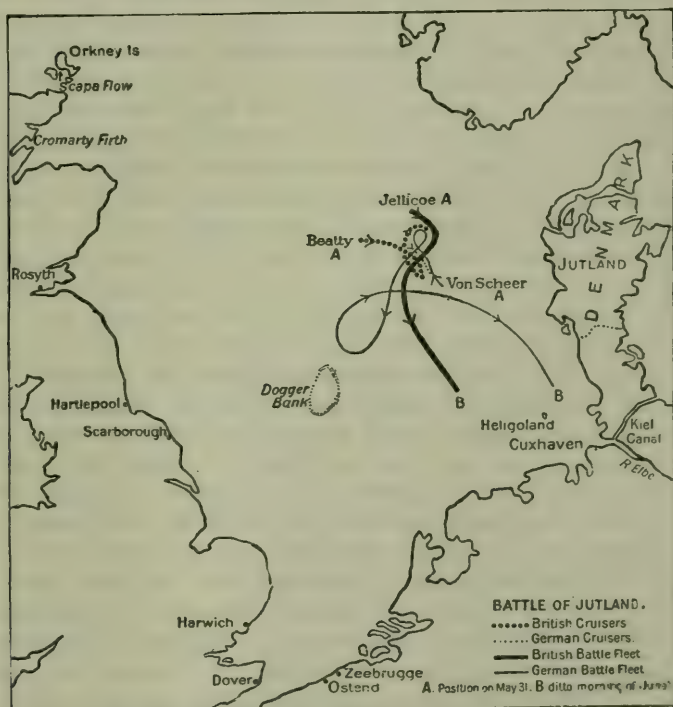


FIG. 60.—NAVAL WARFARE IN THE NORTH SEA.

ority was then, in fact, so narrow that the performance of all her many naval duties was the severest tax upon the Fleet's resources. In the first few months, if ever, the invasion of the east coast would have been a possibility; but it was never tried; and little by little the ceaseless activity of England's shipyards began to give her so decisive a superiority of numbers that she could count on dealing faithfully with any such attempt. Meantime, however, her coasts had not altogether escaped from hostile visitation. Impudent and vexatious, but for the most part harmless, raids, were made by fast enemy cruisers, which ran across under cover of night or mist, fired a few shells on Yarmouth,

Hartlepool, and Scarborough, and then fled back to Kiel with all possible dispatch.

In January, 1915, German cruisers tried to play this trick one time too often; Admiral Beatty's cruiser squadron got wind of their design, cut in upon the raiders as they ran for home, and sank one battleship, the *Blücher*, while severely damaging the rest. This engagement, fought off the Dogger Bank, was a warning to the enemy to discontinue such adventure; and, indeed, thanks to the increase of England's armaments, her defensive dispositions were growing more and more complete. Torpedo-boat flotillas were in readiness at Harwich and at Dover. Beatty's battle cruisers lay for the most part at Rosyth in the Firth of Forth; and at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys was stationed the main Battle Fleet of dreadnoughts and super-dreadnoughts under Admiral Jellicoe. Each of these squadrons was prepared at an instant's notice to descend on any German who appeared in the North Sea. The incessant labours of intrepid mine-sweepers kept the channels always clear. If enemy ships were sighted, patrols, fitted with wireless, would flash back the summons to the larger craft; and it became, in fact, impossible for any vessel to emerge from German ports unobserved or with impunity.

Battle of Jutland.—But, if the Kaiser's fleet was thus effectually "bottled up" in Cuxhaven or Kiel, it was no desire of England that it should remain so. On the contrary, she was eager to give battle whenever the enemy were willing; and more than once she ran considerable risks in trying to induce him to come out. On the first of August, for example, and again on Christmas Eve, British destroyers and light cruisers actually ventured inside Heligoland Bight in the attempt to draw him; but as soon as ever the pursuit became aware of British big vessels in the offing it sheered off and made for home. The fact is, the Germans knew only too well that a fleet in being was of greater value than a fleet at the bottom of the sea; and they were not for taking hazards. Nevertheless they paid a heavy price for their inaction; for England's command of the seas enabled her to cut off all their trade. Slow as England was (out of deference to neutrals) in making use of this advantage, she was driven at last by the necessities of war to use it to the full. In 1915 she began to exercise freely the right of search at sea. In the summer of next year she took a big step forward and declared as contraband, not food alone, but all materials, such as rubber and raw cotton, which might assist the enemy in making war. Difficulties arose, of course, with neutrals like the Dutch, who could import forbidden articles and then sell them to the Germans. But England kept a sharp look out for such-like practices; and by rationing the neutrals for their own consumption she eventually frustrated any leakage of this kind. The sowing of a mine field across the upper end of the North Sea enabled her to intercept all ships that sailed for Europe; and before the War was over the blockade she had so tardily begun came to exercise a painful pressure on the German Army and the German people.

Such pressure, one would think, might well have driven the German Navy to take courage and try conclusions with the British. Yet for that it lacked audacity; and the sole occasion on which the two fleets met was not sought by them at least. What game it was precisely which caused them to come out is of little consequence. Very probably they hoped to catch at unawares some isolated portion of England's scattered forces. But however that may be, the fact remains that about half-past two on the afternoon of 31 May, 1916, the British Battle Fleet, forewarned by intercepted wireless messages that the enemy were at sea, was cruising in search of them and learnt through scouts of their approach. Their cruisers were first sighted opposite the Jutland coast (which gave its name to the battle); and Beatty's cruisers were at once dispatched to intercept their escape south. Failing of that, and coming into contact with the enemy's main Fleet, he turned his squadron north again with intent to draw them after him towards Jellicoe's big ships. This manœuvre exposed him to the concentrated fire of the full German gun-power; and though he gave almost as much damage as he got, two of his ships were sunk. But the manœuvre so far succeeded that the Germans followed, and soon after six o'clock the two main fleets engaged. Jellicoe swerved eastwards towards the Jutland coast, and was just working down between the Germans and their base when they turned away and launched their torpedo flotilla in a grand attack against him. To follow them would have exposed his fleet to fearful risks in meeting this new danger; and, rightly or wrongly, Jellicoe played for caution, drawing away from the torpedo menace and thus losing touch with the main German Fleet. Under the gathering mists of twilight von Scheer, the German admiral, made good his escape south-westward; and though British destroyers followed close behind him, vanished into the night. . . . Till morning Jellicoe kept cruising outside the German base waiting for him to come; but von Scheer never came. He had made a ring round north again and, eluding observation, had crept into port by an unguarded channel. So the great victory England hoped for, and except for fickle weather might have had, was not vouchsafed to her. For all that she had done well; for despite her grievous losses, which were as large or even larger than the Germans', England had decided once and for all the command of the North Sea. The Germans had fought well and their initial salvoes were more accurate than the British. But their gunners were unequal when the real test came, to the superior gun-power of England's super-dreadnoughts; and from first to last their strategy had been the strategy of flight. Morale, when all is said, is of more account than mere mechanical efficiency; and the confinement to harbour which the Germans had accepted was no preparation for a stand-up fight. They might claim Jutland as a victory and welcome; but they knew it in their hearts for a defeat; and never again did they venture to leave harbour until they left it to surrender—vanquished, yet without a fight. Some ground for confidence England therefore had in the autumn of 1916. Hencefor-

ward the supreme risk could be discounted, seeing that her Navy had made good; yet in the approaching winter there was another risk to follow—a risk more subtle and, if anything, more perilous; for this time the attack was aimed no longer at her battle-fleet, but at her defenceless mercantile marine.

When first war broke out, Germany, expecting it, had commerce-raiders ready in every quarter of the globe. Of these the greater part were captured with little or no trouble; but a few remained for some while at large, avoiding detection by ingenious *ruses de guerre* and inflicting terrible havoc on British shipping. All were at length tracked down; and even the elusive and adventurous *Emden* could not escape her fate. In the Pacific, however, there was a cruiser squadron not to be disposed of till it had dealt England a painful blow. Its Admiral, von Spee, caught the British much weaker squadron under Cradock off the western coast of Chile; and Cradock, manfully refusing the alternative of flight, was sunk with all his ships but one small cruiser. The disaster awoke the English Admiralty to instant action. Unknown to the Germans and to Englishmen alike, they sent out Admiral Sturdee with a force sufficient to make short work of von Spee. Guessing the enemy's intention, he made for the Falkland Islands; and sure enough, within twenty-four hours of his arrival the German squadron came steaming towards the port. The issue of the engagement which ensued was a foregone conclusion; the Germans were hopelessly out-gunned; and though they fought pluckily enough, Sturdee's bombardment swiftly sent them to the bottom. Thus the high seas were safe once more to Allied shipping; the blockade of England's Grand Fleet was not easily eluded, occasional raiders which broke out from the North Sea were for the most part soon detected; and there was little left to fear upon this score, had it not been for the unexpected and illegal use which was made of submarines.

The Submarine Menace.—Now the code of naval warfare lays it down that a prize taken at sea must not be scuttled, but be towed into a port or at the very least arrangements made for the safety of its crew. As the submarine, however, could not easily comply with either of these conditions the Germans soon made up their minds to disregard them. At first their depredations were not particularly serious. But gradually their submarines increased in size and number; the range of their operations lengthened out, so that one succeeded in crossing the Atlantic and visiting the United States; more disastrous still, fresh bases were organized in distant seas from which submarines could issue or take in supplies; and in 1915 the Mediterranean became the pirates' favourite hunting-ground. Over a thousand vessels were there sunk within the year; and if the outlook seemed alarming there was worse to come. Hitherto the Germans had never quite made up their minds how far it was wise to carry their illegal practices. Sometimes indeed, as in the notorious instance of the *Lusitania*, they had shown no regard whatever for the lives of those aboard. But more often they

had given fair warning to their victims, allowing time, before they sank a vessel, for the crew's re-embarkation in the boats. When British merchantmen, however, took to mounting guns on deck and retaliated hotly on the submarines, such tactics ceased to pay; and the enemy grew reckless.

Early in 1916 they horrified the world by announcing that in future no warning would be given, but that every vessel would be sunk at sight. The protests of America obtained a short respite; and in point of fact the German preparations were not as yet complete. But though for that year at least they stayed their hand, the prospect was sufficiently alarming; and Jellicoe was in autumn brought back from the main fleet to supervise the improvement of British counter measures. Before many months were out, all England's skill was sorely needed; for in the spring of 1917, and this time in deadly earnest, the great submarine offensive was begun. "Unrestricted Warfare" was declared on all ships that sailed the sea. Without warning, without regard for rights of neutrals or the dictates of humanity, they were to be "sunk without a trace." The crisis was appalling. During that spring one quarter of the vessels which put out from English ports were never seen again. Within a year 6,000,000 tons of British shipping had been lost outright. Food supplies ran perilously short; and despite a stringent rationing England came nearer to starvation than she had ever done before. There were two things alone which saved her; first, the heroism of her merchant sailors, who, for all the risks they ran, never once refused a voyage; and second, the ingenuity and the invincible resolve of her naval officers and men. There was no end to their activities. Destroyers were told off to convey vessels through the danger zone, and woe betide the submarine which dared to show its nose. Other craft of various types undertook the dangerous duty of hunting down the pest. Instruments were invented whereby the sound of a submarine's propeller could be detected from afar; balloons and aeroplanes hovered above the surface to spy out its whereabouts; and swift launches were in readiness to drop a depth-charge of explosives on the spot where it lay. All manner of clever ruses were adopted. "Mystery ships," disguised as harmless tramps, unmasked their hidden batteries on U-boats which had thought them easy prey. But all these various methods notwithstanding, it was long before the situation was got well in hand.

Zeebrugge and German Privations.—The Channel and its approaches were naturally the main field of the enemy's campaign; and their possession of the adjacent Flanders coastline gave them the great advantage of a convenient base. Zeebrugge and Ostend were the two favourite ports of call; and England's determination to put these two ports out of action led to what was perhaps the finest exploit of the War. The harbour of Zeebrugge, it should be explained, is half enclosed by a great pier or mole, which projected far out to sea; and shortly after midnight on 23 April, 1918, two British steamers were

run in and laid beside it.¹ The crews then clambered out over the parapet and engaged in a wild struggle with the German batteries which swept the surface of the mole at point-blank range. At the same time a submarine, fully loaded with explosives, was driven under the bridge which joined the mole to the mainland; and sending it sky-high, cut off the passage for all German reinforcements from the shore. But all this was a mere feint. Under cover of a smoke-screen three other British vessels were stealthily piloted inside the harbour, driven straight for the canal which had served the German submarines for exit, and there deliberately sunk across the fairway. The crews took to their boats and were all picked up outside. The other ships sheered off and left the mole; and the whole flotilla put back to Dover harbour without the loss of a single ship. A few nights later a similar manœuvre was repeated at Ostend; and such was the success of this amazing enterprise that the Germans had not cleared out either channel when the War itself came to a close. Though their submarines still continued to prey upon British shipping, they were no longer able to find shelter in Flemish ports; and so great was the destruction that England wrought among them that it became no easy matter for the Germans to find men prepared to face the terrors of a cruise. Thus, once again the British Navy had triumphed over perils perhaps the greatest it was ever called to meet; and it remained until the end what at the beginning the King called it, the "sure shield" both of England's and of her Allies' cause.

V. RUSSIA, AMERICA, AND THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1917

So, after all, there was a silver lining to the clouds which gathered round England in the early months of 1917; and if it was true she had her troubles, the Germans too had theirs. For had the truth been known, the strain of war was more severely felt beyond the Rhine than in England. The blockade was making itself felt. Food rations were short; and Germany was hungry. Imperceptibly too her energies were beginning to be sapped. For two and a half years now she had been working at highest pressure, intent to put every ounce of human energy into the manufacture of munitions and every man or boy fit to march or bear a musket into the field. Such things cannot continue; and now Germany herself was like some great machine which to the outward eye still works as well as ever, but within are heard those ominous creaks and premonitory groanings which are the prelude of ultimate collapse. Though she would not admit it even to herself, her case was well-nigh desperate; and a sure measure of her desperation was the resolve which she took, as we have seen above, to declare war upon the shipping (and at the same time on the conscience) of the world. It was a fatal and unnecessary step; for had she known

¹ The chief credit of this particular exploit belongs to Captain Carpenter's ship, the *Vindictive*; but the whole operation was under the command of Sir Roger Keyes.

it, an event was now at hand which was to transform in a breath the whole military position and was to bring her much more nearly than we care to think within touch of victory.

The Russian Revolution.—In a backward country such as Russia, the government is bound to be despotic. The Tsar himself might have the best intentions; but a policy of repression was sure to be forced on him at times; and truth to tell, the recent acts of Nicholas' Ministers had been peculiarly and needlessly repressive. Nor, on the other hand, was it a new thing in Russia to find widespread discontent; agitators were invariably at work among the people; and the miseries which followed in the train of war had but increased their chance. In the March of 1917 a shortage of food in the great cities provoked a sudden crisis. A spontaneous rising took place in Petrograd. The Army went over to the people's cause; and within a week the most powerful monarchy which then existed in the world, had crumbled and was gone. The Tsar with his own hand signed a deed of abdication; and his place was taken by the Parliament or Duma, a constitutional experiment extorted from him but a few years previously, but an assembly most unhappily which lacked as yet either experience or authority. The truth was that the Duma represented the bourgeois or middle-classes alone, no more than a tiny fraction of the whole community; and its leaders, though shouldering the task of government with courage, soon found the situation far beyond their own control. For side by side with the usurpation of the Duma, there had been another movement more truly popular, more revolutionary in aim, and yet in a sense more highly organized.

If the peasants of the country-side were slow at first to grasp their opportunity, not so the industrial workers of the towns. Already there were among them leaders of violent, Socialistic views who believed in the gospel of Karl Marx and in the necessity of destroying the capitalist class. Such men had their plans ready; and on the outbreak of revolution working folk throughout the country had formed Councils or "Soviets" which claimed for themselves the right of electing and controlling the future government. Thus Russia found herself torn between rival factions. For a while the issue of the struggle seemed uncertain; but as the months passed, the extremist party triumphed and the moderates went to the wall. In May the old Duma leaders were ousted by Kerensky, who, though more advanced than they, was at least as honestly determined to keep things together. In November he in turn was overthrown by the out-and-out reformers; and Lenin and Trotsky, calling themselves "Bolsheviks" or (as we should say) "whole-hoggers," took up the reins of power. Their gospel, based on Marx, was thorough-going; it aimed at nothing short of the elimination of the capitalist class (which they effected by massacre or slow starvation) and the complete supremacy of the workers' representatives (whom long after the workers had ceased to acquiesce in it, they persisted in asserting to be no one but themselves). They won at the

outset an easy popularity by establishing the peasants in the possession of the land; and the ruffianly assassins whom they bribed by food or money to support them secured their authority by force of arms. A reign of terror, which is was death to disobey, became the settled policy of Russia.

Meanwhile among the first effects of the Revolution had been the disintegration of the Army. "Soviets" were established even at the front; and the soldiers claimed the right to select their officers. The death penalty for cowardice or desertion was abolished; and regiments began to melt away. Though the Duma leaders who first took on the government, had remained loyal to the Allies; and though even Krensky had ordered an offensive which at one time promised well, yet the spirit was gone out of the Russian soldier and a discipline once weakened could never be restored. The collapse was final when in autumn Lenin entered on the scene and began the civil conflict with his fellow-countrymen by arranging for peace parleys with his country's foe. The terms, which were largely dictated by the Germans, were not finally concluded until March, 1918; but almost from the outset of the Revolution the end was not in doubt. As a military factor, Russia might henceforward be discounted; and the whole weight of German manpower could be employed against the West. To the Allies this seemed equivalent to a sentence of defeat, or at best to an indefinite postponement of their hopes of victory. Yet fate was merciful; and German fatuity itself supplied the counterblast to this unkindly blow.

America's Entry.—Hitherto throughout the war the attitude of the United States had been one of strict and even cold neutrality. Though, of course, there was an element among their citizens who were sympathetic to the Allied cause, there were as many more perhaps who, owning no tie of British origin or unwilling to forget old grudges of past history, refused to recognise their obligation to take part in Europe's battle, and who saw nothing in the war but a golden opportunity to make a mint of money out of both belligerents. President Wilson, as in duty bound to reflect his countrymen's opinions, strove to steer a middle course. Not indeed that he was himself without strong views. On the contrary from the outset of his Presidency he had set himself to lift diplomacy onto a high moral plane. He had struck this note already when in 1913 he had ended the dispute over the Panama Canal. His predecessor in office, though in clear violation of a previous pledge, had exempted American coast-wise traffic from the tolls levied upon other shipping, and by his reversal of this decision Wilson had won the applause of all the world. But the problem now confronting him was infinitely more difficult. Himself an idealist of idealists, he regarded war as the summit of human madness, and patient reason as the only true solvent of human misunderstandings. In 1916 he even came forward with an appeal for a peace conference and invited both belligerents for a plain statement of their terms. Yet pressure was not wanting to cause him to take sides. Page, his am-

bassador in London, was urgent with his warnings that the cause of democracy and freedom might yet fail, if succour tarried. Colonel House, his confidential emissary, brought him very near to pledging the United States to war, should the Allies prove unable to gain justice at a peace-parley. Yet, whatever might go on behind the scenes, Wilson leant openly to neither side. His neutrality was so complete that both suspected him of animus if not hostility. He censured the sinking of the *Lusitania*, but he had also objected strongly to the hampering restrictions imposed on neutral commerce by the Allied blockade. In other words, he upheld the rights and interests of America no less against the Allies than against their foe; and he was not prepared to embark upon hostilities for any other purpose than the defence of those same rights.

As time went on, however, his protests against German inhumanity became more vehement. When American passengers were drowned at sea through the act of submarines, he issued sterner warnings; but words without acts made little impression on the German mind; and they soothed themselves with the comfortable fancy that the President's bark was more serious than his bite. There they were wrong; and when their "unrestricted warfare" against shipping was declared in the spring of 1917, they discovered their mistake. The United States were on their mettle; they had said that they would fight and now they meant to show that they could do it. Utterly unprepared as they were for making war, they proposed to swell their tiny army into millions; and they set about the task with a stupendous energy. To the Allies, put in jeopardy by the paralysis of Russia, the Americans' adhesion came like tidings of reprieve. They knew now that if they themselves could hold the ramparts long enough, victory was sure.

Nivelle's Failure.—Nevertheless, it was an uphill fight which the Allies still had to face. During the campaigning season of 1917 they had still a superiority of numbers on the Western front; and while that was so, a vigorous offensive was considered the best policy. Offensives were planned on at least as large a scale as in the previous year; and their failure, which was certainly as great, was the more discouraging. The year's main effort was to be a French attack on the great German angle on the River Aisne. This was conceived and organized by Nivelle, the new French "wonder-man" who had supplanted Joffre in winter, and whom his countrymen fondly imagined to be the heaven-born general that would give them victory at last. What inspired them with such confidence is hard to say; but Nivelle was sanguine of a huge success and counted upon carrying the heights above the Aisne at a single hammer blow. He was rudely disappointed. The details of his plan were captured on the field; the German High Command knew what was coming; they had made their dispositions and the grand coup failed. It is said that the French lost one hundred thousand men on the first day of the attack. Nivelle was then removed; and Pétain took his place with Foch as chief of staff.

Meanwhile it was more than ever imperative for the Allies to strike. Serious mutinies occurred in the French army; and seeking by a swift diversion to relieve the situation, British troops won a more substantial, if limited, success. Attacking in April a few days before Nivelles, they struck hard north of Arras and in a few hours of fighting had captured the long-contested and important Vimy Ridge. The British organization this time was practically perfect; but by now the reinforcements from the Russian front were coming to the Germans, and any further advance was stayed. In June England struck again with the same careful preparation and the same limited success, carrying the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge, which lies southeast of Ypres. This stroke, however, was in reality the prelude to a subsequent operation further north. In the hope of turning the whole German line in Flanders, or even if that failed, of rolling it away from the submarine harbours of the Flemish coast, the British undertook from August onwards a prolonged and obstinate offensive which was chiefly aimed at the Ridge of Passchendaele northeast of the Ypres salient. Unhappily the weather broke; and they made but little headway. The autumn rains turned the low-lying country into a quagmire, and the English were brought to a standstill, in part by the enemy's new system of armoured "pill-box" forts, but even more by the atrocious Flanders mud. One more blow, which came within an ace of startling triumph, was aimed in November at the Hindenburg line itself. Tanks, stealthily brought forward, were here used to break the wire in the place of the normal preparation of artillery. Thus, for once, the enemy were taken by surprise; cavalry were actually sent through the breach; and the British had almost rushed the important town of Cambrai, when German reinforcements were once more hurried to the scene and the English line rolled back again. Thus, from the start to finish of 1917, failure and the dark shadow of Russia's slow defection dogged the Allies at every step. Yet their cup of misfortune was even yet not full. It was not for nothing that during the whole year the enemy had been so strangely quiet. Their blow was still to fall; and this time it fell on Italy.

Collapse of Italy.—In their campaign against the Austrians, the Italians had been fighting on a two-faced front. To the north of Venice they were pressing up through the mountain passes which lead to the Trentino, the province which the war of Italian liberation had left still "unredeemed." East of Venice they were endeavouring to force a passage across the Isonzo valley towards the great Adriatic harbour of Trieste. The rocky plateau, called the Carso, which overlooks this valley, was a position of enormous natural strength; but Cadorna, the Italian *generalissimo*, was not to be put off; and throughout the campaigning seasons of 1916 and 1917 a great battle had been fought and substantial progress made in this direction. The Italians, however, were still far distant from their goal; and their spirits flagged at this deferment of their hope. Signs of their discouragement were quickly noted by the German High Command; and a campaign of

insidious propaganda was begun among their troops. Leaflets dropped by aeroplanes, and rumours spread by spies assured them that Italian lives were being sacrificed to the selfish machinations of perfidious England; and in part the wearied soldiery believed it. In any case they were seriously demoralized when, in the late October of 1917 and shortly before the British offensive at Cambrai, a German general, commanding German troops as well as Austrian, fell suddenly upon the north-east corner of their Isonzo battle-line. The thrust was delivered at Caporetto on a misty day.

The shock of the surprise and the terror and prestige of German arms combined with the low condition of the Italians' own morale, to produce a catastrophe unequalled in the war. The whole of Cadorna's Eastern front collapsed like a sand castle; and, as it fell back in utter rout towards Venice and the plains of Padua, much of the northern army was exposed to the danger of an attack upon its rear and was compelled to follow suit. It was not, in fact, until the line of the Piave River had been reached that Cadorna's forces rallied and a stand was made. Meanwhile, at Italy's appeal, French and British reinforcements had been hurried south to help her. The moral effect of this support put fresh heart into the defenders of her soil; and the Piave line was held. This call on Allied resources was in one sense most unfortunate; for it greatly weakened the British offensive at Cambrai. Yet, if they had not gone, Italy's fidelity would at least have been sorely strained; and indeed this timely co-operation of the Allied armies was the sole source of comfort in an outlook of unmitigated gloom. For a third year in succession autumn had found their fortunes at their lowest ebb. In 1915 Serbia and Russia had collapsed. In 1916 Rumania; and now in 1917 it was the turn of Italy. Yet the disaster brought one benefit. Under the stress of stern necessity the Allies had begun to learn the lesson, so fruitful in its consequence before a year was out, that the Allies' many fronts were essentially one whole, and that in the co-ordination of strategy lay the sole prospect of success. Unity of command was still slow—too slow—in coming; but the principle of the united front was then first reluctantly admitted when the Allies went to the reinforcement of the Piave line.

VI. THE LAST YEAR

Last German Offensive.—Seeking to forecast the chances which the fourth year of war would bring, few could have reckoned the prospect as inspiring. Disillusionment had done its work; and there was a new spirit of bitterness abroad in England. Her heavy losses in the field had broken many hearts. The enemy's aeroplane bombardment of London and the coast had set people's nerves on edge; and, if the nation faced the ordeal of the coming spring with resolution to endure, there was also something in its temper, which had not been seen before—a craving for reprisals and revenge. France, whose ordeal had been

more prolonged and more searching than England's, was equally saddened; but she too was bracing herself to a fresh effort. After a period of doubt and hesitation, Clemenceau, the sturdy patriot of seventy-six, had taken up the reins from the faltering hands of other politicians; and he would not hear of peace. Nor was his confidence unreasoning; for to the Germans, too, this was no less an anxious moment. They knew well enough that their time was short. By autumn at latest America's new army would be fit to take the field; and it was now or never if they were to win the War.

Yet the opportunity was favourable. The peace just made with Russia gave them such an advantage on the Western front as they

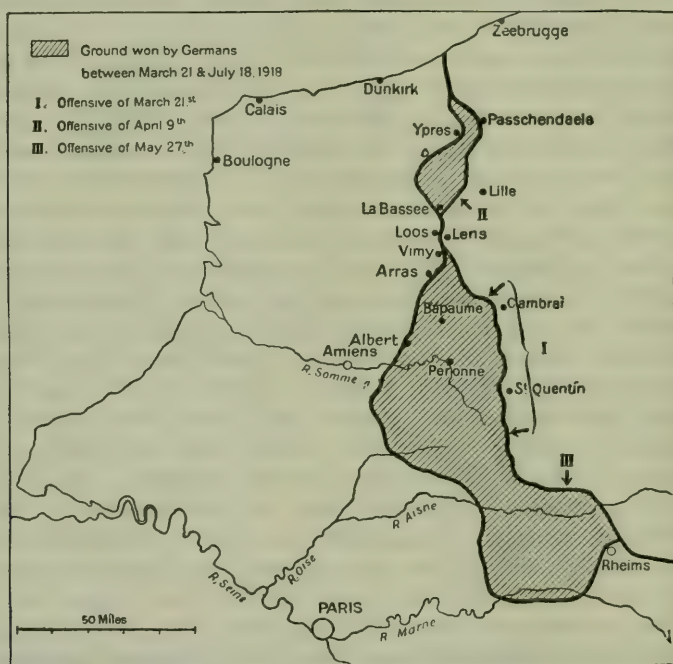


FIG. 61.—THE LAST GERMAN OFFENSIVE.

had not enjoyed since the battle of the Marne. Ludendorff was convinced that he could break the Allies' battle-line, and he was determined to stake all on a last desperate throw. The point selected for the grand attack was on the Hindenburg line sector between Arras and St. Quentin; and the choice was good. For the frontage here held by the British Fifth Army under Gough was perilously extended. One bayonet to a yard was the inadequate allowance. The trench system they had dug was still very far from perfect. There were no reserves. And, when on that fatal Thursday the 21st of March, the fierce onslaught was delivered through the mists of dawn, the British line was broken in a yawning gap. Forty German divisions against

fourteen were odds beyond the resistance of even British pluck; and Gough's army fell back westwards in terrible disorder. Past Bapaume and Peronne they went, and over the old battle-fields of the River Somme till the town of Amiens itself was threatened; and, if that fell, then all indeed was over; for the whole system of rear communications would in such a case be cut. But in the nick of time the rout was stayed. The British Third Army, pivoting on Arras, held firm on the north flank. The speed of the Germans faltered, as they drew farther from their base. French troops arrived; and powerful reinforcements were hurried out from England; and soon within sight of the very towers of Amiens the enemy was held. Yet he still possessed the initiative of battle; and by swift movement of his forces could strike fresh blows where the Allies were weak. On the 9th of April a second drive began in the neighbourhood of Lille; and it was the same tale as in the south, though on a lesser scale; ground which had taken three years to win was lost in as many days. Neuve Chapelle passed back again to German hands; Wytschaete went, and Messines and Mount Kemmel in their rear. Ypres alone was held; and even there, before British troops had stemmed the onrush, they were forced to draw back from the low hills of Passchendaele. It was the turn of the French next. Another swift movement of Ludendorff's reserves and on 27 May their Aisne divisions were taken by surprise; and, before they could recover, the enemy was racing south along the road to Paris. In three days they reached the Marne. But the point of their thrust was narrow; and they were compelled to pause till it could be broadened out. The respite was enough. The French resistance stiffened; the vigour of the enemy's impetus was spent; for the moment at any rate he had shot his bolt. And meantime the plans were forming in the brain of one who knew that the German Army could be beaten and who meant to beat it. At the crisis of the March retreat, a step was taken which was nearly four years overdue. Foch had been appointed to command, not the French forces only, but the whole Allied Army of the Western front. "You give me a lost battle," he had said, "and you expect me to be grateful." On few men, indeed was a heavier burden ever laid; for on his decisions now hung the fate of the whole world.

Foch's Counter-Blow.—For the Allies the worst was over; and by midsummer it was possible to breathe again. The enemy's three blows, aimed first at Amiens, then at the Channel Ports, and, last of all, at Paris, had each in turn been parried; and the lull which followed in the month of June betokened his temporary exhaustion. To the Allies, on the other hand, every day and week that passed was now clear gain. Crowded transports were rushing troops across the Atlantic; already over a million Americans had landed on French soil, and a few, whose training was sufficiently complete, had been put into the line. But, when all is said, not even the most extravagant of optimists could then have dared to prophesy that by autumn the War would have been won.

We did not yet know Foch. . . . The last of the three great German inroads upon the Allied line had formed a gigantic triangle with its apex pointing towards Paris and its south side resting on the Marne. Their next effort was directed against this southern side;¹ and on 15 July they were actually advancing on the river's lower bank. Foch had foreseen the move, had foreseen, too, that their concentration in this southerly direction would leave the triangle's west side ill guarded, and he was ready. Among the woods of Villers-Cotterets he had an army of reserve in hiding; and, at the moment when the enemy were fully committed to their new offensive, this army was let loose. On 18 July—a date ever to be remembered as the turning of the tide—it crashed through into the salient, threatening Soissons and, more important still, taking the whole southern line of Germans in the rear. Back they had to come almost as quickly as they had first descended. There was no such actual rout as in 1914; but by the beginning of August they were once more upon the Aisne. Foch's blow, however, had done more than relieve the threat to Paris. It had restored to the Allies the initiative of battle; and from that time forward the enemy were not allowed a moment's rest. The last phase was now at hand.

The Allied Advance.—The masterpiece of strategy which in three short months was to drive the German army out of France is not to be unfolded in a few brief lines. It is enough to say that Foch was like a boxer whose opponent's parries come always just too late; and, while the feeble defence goes fumbling towards the point last threatened, a fresh and deadly blow is driven home elsewhere. So it was that, before the Germans had recovered from the shock of the first surprise, Haig had followed it with such another. On 8 August he broke through east of Amiens; and, while the Germans struggled to patch this gap in turn, he hammered them back to the outskirts of Bapaume. So the blows rained down—right, left, and right again—till by the first week in September the British had made an actual breach in the Hindenburg defences between Arras and Cambrai. The German soldiers were still fighting with a dour and dogged courage; but they knew themselves outplayed. They could no longer cope with Allied resources. Hundreds of tanks were travelling forward with the infantry's advance. There were now more shells in Allied depôts than they could usefully employ. Above all, the men were buoyant with the flush of their success. Nothing could stop them now. Covering Cambrai and St. Quentin there was a deep canal, which, properly defended, would have been a far worse obstacle than any trench; but, even this was not enough. With rafts and life-belts British troops plunged in and, swimming or floating over, occupied the further bank. Where the canal was dry, large tanks, descending to the miry bottom, formed of themselves a bridge whereby smaller tanks could cross. Such tactics and such a

¹ East of Rheims also the Germans were attacking; but there, after making a little ground, they were definitely held.

spirit were irresistible; and early in September, while the French entered St. Quentin, Cambrai fell to the British. The Germans were now fairly on the run; and east of this town at the beginning of November Haig played his final stroke. A crushing victory, won on a front of thirty miles, broke the enemy's resistance once for all. Foch's net was closing in, and the end was near; for meanwhile the other Allied armies had been moving forward too. A Franco-Belgian combination had rolled back the Germans from the Flemish coast, past Lille, past Tournai, and a good half-way to Brussels.

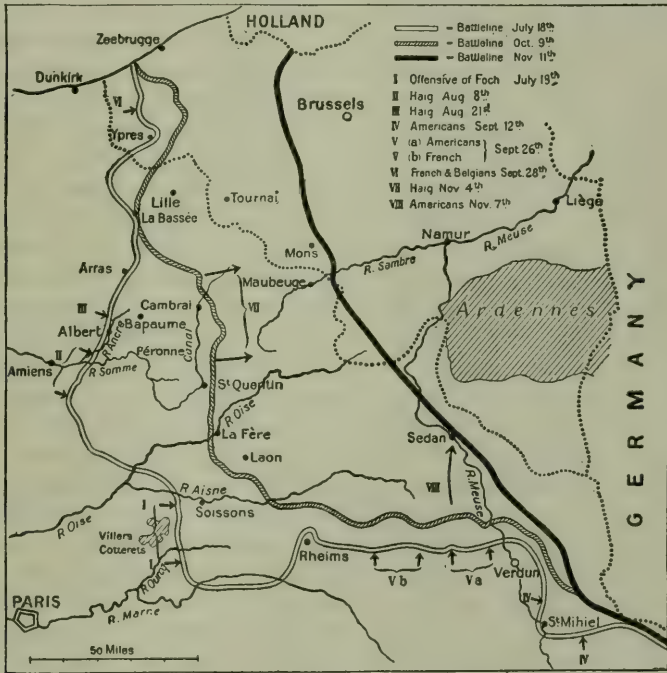


FIG. 62.—FOCH'S OFFENSIVE, JULY-NOVEMBER, 1918.

In the south the Americans also were now upon the move; they had first tried their novice hand at flattening out the enemy's salient at St. Mihiel, south of Verdun. Then, turning to the north of the great fortress and working in close co-operation with the French upon their left, they had struck up towards Sedan. The spurt of their early progress, when a single day's advance made seven miles, was too impetuous to last; but they struggled on; and at the beginning of November they, too, gave a fresh leap forward, this time to the capture of Sedan. Fate showed a grim irony in these last moments; and, within three days of Sedan's fall, the Allied troops had entered Mons. For the German army, weakened by its losses and distracted by continuous defeat, the game was now played out. It was in an impossible position,

pinned with its back against the rugged barrier of the Ardennes hills. Such roads as gave an exit through that broken country eastwards were choked with the confusion of columns in retreat. To escape *as an army* was beyond the Germans' power. One other blow from Foch, and the world would have witnessed a catastrophe, beside which Sedan or Waterloo or Leipsic must have seemed mere bagatelles.

Collapse of Bulgar, Turk and Austrian.—It by no means detracts from the credit due to Foch, or from the decisive nature of his triumphs, that events which occurred elsewhere than the French battle-front contributed to the enemy's ultimate collapse. The great combination, which for four and a half years the master hand of Germany had held together, was bound to go to pieces if the master hand itself should fail; and the enemy alliance, when it began to crack, cracked at many points at once. The weakest link in the chain went first. Bulgaria was at no time a very enthusiastic member of the league. Her quarrel was with Serbia; but she did not love the Germans and she loathed the Turk. Her heart, therefore, was no longer in the business; and her collapse was swift. The Salonica army had recently improved in health and confidence and numbers. It had lately been reinforced by volunteers from Greece, Venizelos, the patriot statesman, having raised the banner of revolt against the pro-German kind and thereby won his countrymen to the cause of the Allies. The remnant of the Serbs had been reorganized and brought into the line; and they were itching for a chance of their revenge. Franchet d'Esperey, the French commander-in-chief, timed his offensive for the middle of September. He broke the Bulgarian army at a single blow. Within a week he was close upon their frontier. Within ten days an armistice was signed, equivalent to unconditional surrender.

It was the turn of the Turk next. Already in the course of the last eighteen months he had received some severe hammering from British armies in the East. In the first months of 1917 Sir Stanley Maude had retrieved the tragedy of Kut, advancing up the Tigris in a dashing style, winning a great victory on Townshend's old battle-field at Ctesiphon, and entering Bagdad within a fortnight from the start of his great drive. Mesopotamia being thus disposed of, it remained for England to conquer Palestine. There failure had dogged her till in June of 1917 Sir Edmund Allenby took over the command. In the following winter he had turned the Turks' position by the capture of Gaza on the coast, swept north towards Jerusalem, and a fortnight before Christmas entered it. His best troops were then recalled to France to meet the great March offensive; but Indian regiments were drafted in, and in September Allenby, too, was ready to deal the knockout blow. On the 19th he fell upon the Turks among the Samarian hills and broke them utterly. The cavalry, bursting through, crossed the plain of Esdraelon and cut in upon their rear. Soon there was no Turkish army left to block British progress; they overran Damascus and pushed on into Aleppo when on the last day of October the Turk, too, cried out for peace.

Even more dramatic was the collapse of Austria. The loyalty of her peoples to the Hapsburg Emperor had scarcely ever proceeded from anything but fear; but a tradition of obedience is not quickly broken off, and the success of German arms throughout the War had cowed the spirit of the malcontents. In 1916, however, the death of the aged Francis Joseph had removed a figure-head whom all at least respected; and disaffection was now rife throughout the country, not least among the regiments on the Piave battle-front. Such was the state of things when suddenly in the middle of October the victorious Austrian army of the preceding autumn broke and ran like rabbits before the attack of the British and Italian troops. Simultaneously a rising was effected at Trieste and the Italians occupied the city from the sea. Austria, too, was out of the War.

Collapse of Civilian Germany.—Thus Germany was left alone to face the music; and, for all her seeming strength, she was in no condition for a single-handed fight. A bluff which has come as near to triumph as had hers fails but the more disastrously when the bitter truth of failure is revealed. For four years Germany had lived upon a lie, pretending that her cause was just and that God was on her side. The skilful manipulation of military news had hypnotized the civil population into a belief in certain victory. But continuous advertisement of German prowess had brought the end no nearer; and the hungry, disheartened people grew weary of the War. The Allies lost no chance of playing on such feelings; and skilful use of propaganda turned the enemy's favourite weapon to his own undoing. Leaflets were scattered from the air or smuggled in through Holland, exhorting the Kaiser's subjects to shake off a tyranny which had brought them to this pass; and, despite the frantic denunciations of Hindenburg himself, the working classes of the Fatherland began to feel a doubt whether they were not after all the Emperor's dupes. Their conversion was completed by the idealistic and disinterested diplomacy of the President of the United States.

In language of lofty sentiment Wilson paved the way towards peace. He announced that, in the first place, no parley could be held with the Kaiser or his ministers, but only with the elected representatives of the German folk itself. Provided, however, that a new Government were formed upon democratic lines, he undertook to use his offices to promote an honest peace; and the general principles which should govern such a peace he defined in his famous document, the Fourteen Points. The effect of this pronouncement was to raise the flagging hopes of the weary populace. Disloyal murmurs, hitherto but barely whispered, now rose in swelling chorus. At the beginning of November, quickly as Foch's grapple closed on the beaten foe, events behind the front moved quicker still. The naval crews at Kiel and other seaports broke out in mutiny; and even among the long-suffering, obedient masses the taint of revolution spread apace. The worm had turned at last; and it was clear that the Kaiser now must yield or perish. Broken

by the knowledge that his country was in ruins and that its ruin was the outcome of his own misguided rule, the wretched man lost nerve, signed a deed of abdication on the ninth day of November, and escaped across the frontier into Holland. A new government was formed by the Socialistic leaders in the Reichstag; and on the 11th of November an Armistice, dictated in the main by Foch, was accepted and declared. The Allied troops went forward to the occupation of the Rhineland towns; huge quantities of guns and other military material were surrendered in due course; and the German Fleet—worst of all humiliations—made rendezvous with the British for the first time and the last. Whatever should have happened when the Armistice was over, the War itself could never be renewed. The Germans had been beaten, and beaten because, in the words of the man who beat them, they “forgot that above men there is a moral law, and above warfare Peace.”¹

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PEACE

I

Allied and Enemy Ideals.—War is a disease from which the process of recovery must needs be slow and painful; and even the fruits of victory, which in prospect seem so golden, are apt to turn to ashes in the hand. Peace indeed returns; but the settlement which brings it is nearly always in the nature of a compromise, satisfying no one. To some its terms seem harsh, to others unwarrantably tender; so that the authors of the contract earn little but abuse. And to all this the Treaty signed at Versailles in 1919 was no exception. The Great War had been a clash between two rival theories, two opposite ideals for the future of the world. On the one hand was the ideal of the Central Empires, standing for an obsolete tradition of the past and the irresponsible ambition of the old-world kings—monarchical authority, diplomatic insincerity, the power of the sword to decide the course of history, and the right of the strong to dominate the weak. It was an ideal which Europe had long since learnt to loathe and which it had already defeated in many a hard-fought struggle; and the Kaiser himself was no more than a bad copy of his own forebear the Great Frederick or of Frederick’s prototype, Louis XIV. The Allies, upon the other hand, whose task it had been once more to overcome this evil thing, professed a creed of politics which was precisely its reverse. They stood for democracy and the peoples’ right to manage their own affairs, for nationality and the freedom of small states, and, above all, for an international relationship of mutual toleration and goodwill. But ideals are brittle things and difficult to square with the rude angularities of solid fact. The con-

¹ Foch writing about Napoleon.

clusion of the War brought forward problems which neither of the combatants, while combatants, had faced; and so it was that, when peace arrived at last, not one of them was sure of his own mind, and there was a strange confusion of ideas in either camp. The Germans hovered uneasily between an obstinate allegiance to the outworn creed which ruined them and the unfamiliar doctrines of republican self-government which they had so recently embraced to save their skin. The aristocratic Junkers, upon their part, deplored their own lost supremacy and would have dearly loved to see the Kaiser back. The masses showed more balance; and, while they declined to imitate the wild experiments of Bolshevik Russia, they equally resisted a return to the old régime. When a harebrained attempt was made by the Kaiser's partisans to tamper with the troops and upset the People's Government, the whole German nation went spontaneously on strike: the coup collapsed for want of any to support it, and the spell of Kaiserdum was seen to have lost its hold. But the terms of the Versailles Treaty were not, after all, for Germany to formulate.

Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George.—The representatives of the four leading Powers—France, Italy, America, and England—were the true arbiters of that great settlement; and among them, too, there was now a wide divergence of ideals. According as the nation which each stood for had suffered much or little from the War, it was difficult or easy to shake free from the ingrained prejudice of old-world politics, and prefer the enlightened arguments of reason to the selfish exploitation of triumphant force. President Wilson, still riding the high horse of his magnanimous philosophy, ignorant of the niceties of European problems, and divorced from all direct interest in the territorial settlement, was desirous above all things to establish the world's peace upon those abstract principles of generosity and justice which he had long been preaching to a world at war. But the prophet, in his rapture over the imminent millennium, had neglected to take count of the jealousies of nations. Those jealousies persisted none the less; and for all the President's preaching the millennium he had pictured was not realised in fact. The ox unaccountably refused to be friendly with the lion. The wolf was still eager as ever to devour the lamb. Thus Italy, for example, had been promised a large strip of the Adriatic seaboard; and, although its Slav inhabitants should by rights have had the choice of it, she insisted on her claim. Poland, too, had "national aspirations" of a most flamboyant character.

But the worst offender against the President's philanthropy was France. For her, realities bulked larger than ideals. During more than forty years she had been living under the instant terror of the German bully; for four years and over his grip had been upon her very throat; and now she was determined, since the chance was offered, to disable him for ever of his power to harm. There was even talk in Paris of annexing the whole country west of Rhine; and, if that should not prove feasible, there was still the plan of exacting an indemnity sufficient to cripple

Germany for half a century to come. Between this view, of which Clemenceau was sponsor, and the view of the President of the United States, England's representative at the Conference stood midway. Lloyd George was still by sympathy a Liberal, and, as a Liberal, anxious to forget the ugly past and build the world anew upon the broader basis of international goodwill. A natural tenderness for France, however, bound him to give generous recognition to her claims; and a rash undertaking to exact an impossible indemnity, put forward at the General Election of December and intended to catch votes for the continuance of the Coalition Government, had tied his hands yet further at the Council Board. Yet Lloyd George can trim his sails adroitly on occasion; and more than most among the delegates his mind was open to the appeal of commonsense. Of Germany's crime against the world and of the justice of requiring due recompense at her hands there was no question or dispute; the only point of difference between the Allied delegates was how much should be required; Clemenceau, like Shylock, was for having his "pound of flesh." Wilson wished to preserve the German people from political extinction, taking his stand on the forgotten Fourteen Points. Lloyd George held the scales; and in the issue his weight was thrown rather upon the side of France.

Indemnity and Annexations.—Such then was the attitude of the three leading figures of the Conference which early in 1919 assembled for the discussion of the Peace in the great Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles. It was a lordly gathering. Almost every nation under heaven was represented there; for, by the time the War was over, there was scarcely a neutral left. Germany's smaller neighbours, it is true—the Swiss, the Danes, the Dutch, the Scandinavians—had not ventured to attack her. But, outside the bounds of Europe, she had now not a single friend. Japan, by a previous treaty of Alliance, had been with England from the start. Portugal had soon joined the Allies, proud to repay England's services of a century ago. Then in the closing year, when the German's gross brutality in his submarine campaign had proved him to be the enemy of humanity at large, the rest came tumbling in to share the Allied victory. China had declared war, though she clearly could not fight. The South American republics did the same. Even obscure chieftains of equatorial kingdoms made pompous proclamation of their adhesion to the cause. So now all the world was gathered to the great Tribunal. Only the representatives of defeated foes were left outside the door.

As at the Congress of Vienna which concluded the Napoleonic wars, so here the work performed may be classed under three heads—the punishment of the enemy, the redistribution of the map, and (once again) an effort more earnest and more hopeful to bind the nations of the world together in a league of lasting peace.

Germany's punishment was terrible—though not more terrible than the crime which brought it on her head. The chief penalty imposed by the unanimous opinion of her judges was that she should make good,

so far as possible, the havoc of the War. But how far it was possible proved more difficult to say. Wilson in his Fourteen Points had limited the claim of reparation to the damage inflicted on civilian property alone. The French went further, demanding that Germany should shoulder the whole burden of the cost; and Lloyd George had already assured the British public that she should pay to the last mite. Sums were named running to the unimaginable total of fifteen or twenty thousand million pounds; and, though the amount was left unsettled when the peace was signed, it has since been fixed at six and a half thousand.

But it has yet to be discovered in what form it can be paid—whether in exports or in labour or in worthless German notes;—still less does it seem easy to exact the payment, should Germany refuse it. Some say she cannot pay; others that she can; but in any case her task has not been rendered easier by the enormous territorial losses to which the Versailles settlement condemned her. In the West, Alsace-Lorraine, with its valuable minefields, went back, of course, to France. In the East, a large portion of East Prussia was made over to the Poles, so that the remnant which Germany retains is actually severed from her frontier. Silesia, however, which also the Poles claimed, was left to decide its own destiny by vote and elected to stay German.¹ The northern half of Schleswig was given a like option and voted itself back under the Danish rule. Germany's chief losses, however, lay beyond the seas. In the course of the War, all her colonies had one by one been captured—her Chinese station at Kiao-chow by the Japanese, her Pacific islands by the Australians, the Cameroons by Franco-British troops. The South African army under General Smuts had fought two strenuous and difficult campaigns to win German Southwest and German East Africa. None of the captors was ready to relinquish the spoils to Germany; nor, in the interest of the native populations, did it seem desirable to do so. Accordingly, by a stroke of the pen, the whole Colonial Empire, built up with so much industry and effort, was unconditionally cancelled; and Germany was left without an inch of territory beyond the seas.

Settlement of the Near East.—Such transference of territory in various continents involved, of course, considerable alteration of the map. But an even more important and far-reaching transformation occurred in the near East. The principle of settlement to which the Allies had here been pledged was based on the democratic doctrine of “self-determination”; they held, in other words, that for all peoples great or small there is an inherent right to determine under what flag they wish to live. Now the Austrian Empire had for centuries held sway over subject populations of non-German blood—Rumanians, Czecho-Slovaks, Poles, Jugo-Slavs, Italians. These were now free upon the Allies' principle to determine their own destiny; and not the least outcome of the Versailles settlement was to break the Austrian Empire

¹ The Poles protesting, however, it was subsequently repartitioned.

into fragments. Italy regained her Trentino and Trieste; across the Adriatic she obtained a small strip of coast; but not half of what she wanted. For there a new and powerful kingdom was established embracing, along with the main Dalmatian coast, Montenegro, Serbia, Herzegovina, and Bosnia—a solid Jugo-Slav reunion. Hungary, stripped of Transylvania, which Rumania now recovered, became a separate and independent State; and Austria, thus reduced to an insignificant Repub-



FIG. 63.—THE NEW EUROPE, 1921.

lic, saw established on her north a new and virile power—the Czechoslovaks of Bohemia, while beyond the Carpathians the Poles absorbed Galicia and threatened in the heyday of their new-found strength to prove a thorough nuisance to their neighbours.

The disadvantages of such a settlement have shown themselves already. For, unhappily, among these youthful nationalities, thus suddenly set free, there was a dangerous element of selfish rivalry and crude ambition. The sufferings of war had not availed to damp their martial ardour. Within two years Rumania marched on Hungary and

the Poles invaded Russia; and the fertile seeds of many future wars lie in petty jealousies of these heterogeneous States. A more immediate peril was the check which the break-up of the Empire set on the resumption of the normal activities of life. The artificial bond of Hapsburg tyranny had at least made all these peoples commercially one whole. Now, however, the old lines of trade were broken by the new-drawn frontiers. Traditional dissensions prevented the free interchange of produce; and Austria was soon starving, because her former subjects took the mean revenge of refusing her supplies. Whatever else the Versailles settlement has done, it has not bestowed upon the lands of Eastern Europe the promised blessings of prosperity and peace. The problem of Turkey was less difficult. There were indeed discussions over Constantinople's fate; but it was not considered feasible to evict the Turk from Europe, and he remains on sufferance. The bulk of Asia Minor, too, was left him; but Greece, which had joined the Allies, thanks to Venizelos' foresight, was rewarded with a strip of the West coast. North Syria went to France; Palestine, to England; and Mesopotamia, which the Germans so much coveted, fell also into British hands. It is, however, to be noted that in assigning protectorates over these and similar half-civilized communities a new system was evolved. Actual possession was not granted; but the protecting Power is to administer the lands as a trustee to the League of Nations. This in itself is a significant advance upon the old-fashioned notions of the rights of conquest; and, though doubtless there is great advantage to be gained from the commercial exploitation of these backward countries, yet other responsibilities are recognized as binding. Duties, as well as profits, are now to be considered; and, in germ at least, a new code of international morality has been born into the world.

League of Nations and Bolshevism.—It had been frequently asserted during the four preceding years that this was a war which would end war; and the "League of Nations" was perhaps the only part of the Versailles settlement which gave promise of fulfilling that prediction. If Wilson was compelled to yield over the remainder of his programme, he was allowed his way at any rate in this; and the winding-up of the prolonged negotiations was actually delayed for many months in order that the details of the "Covenant" might be properly completed and form an integral part of the Treaty to be signed. Of the multitudinous problems which arise from such a project there is here no room to speak. It is enough to say that many statesmen and communities still doubt the practicability of the whole scheme, and that, unless the League's decisions are backed, not by statesmen only, but by the public opinion which these represent, then clearly means will lack of compelling their acceptance; and the nations must inevitably resort once more to the suicidal alternative of war. Still the experiment seemed worthy of a trial. Some signed in hope that good would come of it; some with the more cynical assurance that at least it could do no harm. The machinery of the League was in due course set in motion; the delegates

appointed to sit upon its Council; its Council established at Geneva; its solid work begun; and, before many months were out, its decisions flouted by the irresponsible antics of an elderly Italian poet!¹ It is to be feared that as yet this Parliament of the nations has but little more title to command obedience than the smallest armed State among them; and how slight a hold the idea has won upon the imagination of mankind was proved by the humiliating failure which awaited its author, the President, at home.

On recrossing the Atlantic, Wilson invited his countrymen to ratify the Covenant; and they refused. The United States is still outside the League, so deep-seated even now are the suspicion and mistrust which keep the nations from uniting for the salvation of the world. Yet never did the world stand in sorer need of unity. The fabric of modern civilization has been built up on mutual confidence and a closely woven system of international finance. No country now can afford to stand in commercial isolation. Few can even supply for themselves the necessities of life. Trade at this present moment is not restored because nearly every country hesitates to sell goods to its neighbour, doubting its neighbour's ability to pay. Enormous loans of money, too, advanced during the War, have left the continental Governments the debtors of Great Britain and Great Britain the debtor of the United States. The liquidation of these liabilities and the restoration of the world's prosperity can be accomplished only in a fraternal spirit of forbearance and goodwill. It is, in fact, happy omen, not a reason for despair, that the world is now poor and hungry and that trade languishes. For our very need will force us in the end to compose our differences; and, if a League of Nations did not actually exist, economic necessities would oblige us sooner or later to invent one. However bitter may be the learning of the lesson, hard facts force home on us the sober truth, that through hatred man must perish and through love only may he thrive.

Thus, not without false steps and frequent hesitations the great Conference of Versailles brought tardily to an end its self-appointed task of rebuilding the new world on the foundations of the old. Whether its building was of the best or wisest, the future will determine; but at any rate it was not without a rival in the work of Reconstruction, whose ideals were of a wholly different type. For elsewhere, meanwhile, other builders had been busy; and the foundation on which these built was wholly new. The Bolsheviks of Russia, first among the revolutionaries of history, had essayed to tear up society by the very roots, and were now, so to speak, replanting it head-downwards. Even Robespierre and his colleagues had attempted no such thing. All they did was to sweep away an obsolete political machinery; and the outcome of their handiwork was to give their countrymen a new code of laws and a parliamentary vote. For the normal citizen of revolutionary France life itself was not radically changed. There had been no genuine break

¹ D'Annunzio, who, indignant that the Adriatic port of Fiume should not have been ceded to Italy, raised a band of volunteers and occupied the town.

in the evolution of civilized society. But the great upheaval of 1917 was very much more than a break; it was a yawning gulf. Russia before Lenin and Russia after Lenin were two utterly different things. Bolshevism had swept over the country like a hurricane and blotted out the past. It interchanged the whole position of the classes. It allowed to no one but the manual workers the right to participate in government or business, or even, if it came to that, to exist at all. The well-to-do classes who had hitherto lived in comfort on the interest of their capital were stripped bare of all they had. Archdukes and duchesses were reduced to selling matches. Millionaires begged in the street. For in the most literal sense the Bolsheviks applied the old commandment—"By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread"; and the "idle bourgeois," as the middle class were called, were simply left to starve.

Meanwhile the workers, entering eagerly upon their stolen heritage, proposed to put in practice their own beautiful dreams of socialistic theory and to have "all things in common," like the early Christian saints. Nothing, according to the formula of Lenin, was to belong to individuals; the railways, the factories, even the peasants' grain, all was henceforward the property of the State. Yet the experiment was doomed to inevitable failure, because, even among Russian working men, the human instinct for amassing wealth is stronger than the instinct for sharing it with others. The peasant, despite Lenin's exhortations, has insisted on regarding his grain crops as his own. The industrial workers have deliberately idled at the State's expense; and the production of the factories has shrunk beyond belief. The population of the towns was perishing by slow starvation; misery, destitution, and despair seemed to have supplanted the bright vision of a Workers' Paradise. Nevertheless, contrary to the confident prediction of its enemies, Bolshevism has retained its hold on Russia, and this notwithstanding every effort to unseat it. Lenin indeed had provoked the hostility of neighbouring States by declaring that he would carry the workers' revolution into every land where the Capitalist still holds sway. At this—and not unnaturally—Western Governments felt anxious. They were none too certain how their own workers might behave; and somewhat half-heartedly, as though doubtful of their cause, they took up the challenge. No grand scale operation was, in fact, attempted; but the reckoning was that, if outside help were given them, the Russian people would themselves arise and throw off the monstrous tyranny. So in 1918 a British expedition was sent out by way of the White Sea, and a tentative offensive was begun from Archangel. It was an utter failure. The Russian people, oddly enough, showed no signs of wanting it, and the British army had to be brought back. But England was not to be discouraged; and when the Russian general, Koltehak, raised the anti-Bolshevist standard in Siberia, she sent out men and munitions to assist him. It was equally in vain; his troops were tempted to desertion by Lenin's propaganda, and before the attack of Trotsky's Red contingents he was put to utter rout. Like fate befell Denikin, who attempted the same

tactics in the south. The French might send him officers and England lend him tanks; but from the Russian folk itself he got no backing. Half fearful, it would seem, of a return of Tsardom, half cowed by the terror of the Reds' ferocity, they were either unwilling or unable to shake off their Bolshevik masters. The fact is that their semi-civilized society, so long accustomed to the iron control of monarchical authority, is not yet ripe for true self-government. It needs a strong-handed discipline to hold the unwieldy, helpless, and distracted realm together; and that, pending the arrival of a better, the Bolshevik Government supplies.

II

India, Egypt and Ireland.—On the 28th of June, 1919, more than six months after the declaration of the Armistice and five years to the very day from the fateful crime committed in the Serajevo streets, the Treaty of Versailles was duly signed by the unwilling representatives of Germany. Austria accepted her fate a little later; and Turkey last of all. Peace had returned; and with it, not the good things we had expected, but disorder, rancour, suspicion, and bitter disillusionment. From whatever point of view it be regarded, this is a sick and sorry world; nor has England, as is but too sadly evident, escaped the infection of its maladies. The ordeal, under which great empires had gone down in utter ruin, could scarcely fail to shake the foundations of her own. For England, who holds dominion over a dozen different countries, this was a testing moment. For the cry of liberty takes on new meanings in the mouth of those that use it; and the very gospel of self-determination is now seen to be double-edged.

There are peoples within the British Empire who, with some show of justice, can claim its application to themselves; and, if the answer be that they are not yet fit for liberty, such an answer is no medicine for their discontent. India, for example, seethes with a deep unrest; and, though generous concessions have latterly been granted, and the natives admitted to a larger share in the country's government, the fundamental grievance still remains. England rules; and, however mild or beneficent her yoke, it stinks in the nostrils of the Nationalists. Fanatical, unbalanced, and embittered, but often versatile and deeply read, these men have learnt the catchwords of the Western world's ideals; and democratic doctrines are now preached throughout a country in which nine-tenths of the inhabitants can neither read nor write. Agitators play upon the ugly passions of the fickle populace; and there have been moments when a repetition of the Mutiny seemed imminent. White men have been murdered; and at Amritsar and elsewhere the British garrison has taken bloody toll of threatening mobs. The future is still dark; the clouds are low; but of one thing we may be certain. Only the cool hand and the unswerving justice which in the past have availed to keep India can guide it safely through the shoals which lie ahead;

and, if the task seems difficult, we should do well to recollect that it was England who sought it at the first. Nor does the trouble in India stand alone. What agitators there are urging and will urge for years to come has already been accomplished in a neighbouring land. Egypt was never British in the same sense that India is; and England had pledged herself to leave it in due course. The call which took her there was undeniable. The justice of her rule is beyond dispute; but the demand for liberty, stirred to more vigorous life by the upheaval of the War and still more by the conditions of the democratic peace, has now become so loud and so insistent that she must bow to it. As advisers the British went to Egypt, and, as advisers, they will remain; but the real authority of government goes back to native hands, and, whatever benefits of prosperity and peace the brief British occupation has bestowed upon the country, it lies henceforward with the Egyptian folk itself to develop them or let them slip away.

In one other dependency—and that more vital still than India or than Egypt—the right of British hegemony had yet again been vigorously arraigned. As an educated and civilized community, Ireland possessed claims to self-determination which those more backward countries cannot boast. Her proximity to England, on the other hand, made the problem of releasing her a hundredfold more difficult; nor did the treacherous blow which she dealt England at the crisis of the War give ground for putting trust in her good faith. The Dublin insurrection of 1916 was easily suppressed, but not easily forgotten. The memory rankles still; but among the rebels its failure was no signal to relax. Sir Roger Casement, whom the Germans sent across to lead the crazy venture, paid forfeit with his life; but there were other daring spirits to carry on the battle, and Irishmen by thousands to obey their call. In part by an elaborate propaganda which evoked the Celt's inherent love of liberty and passion for a fight, in part by a campaign of ruthless terror, which cowed loyal citizens into silence or support, the Sinn Fein organization won such hold on Ireland as not Wolfe Tone nor O'Connell nor Parnell himself can ever have enjoyed.

The British Government was thus brought face to face with an unprecedented crisis. Such offer of Home Rule as it could contemplate was now scorned as valueless; complete independence and a self-contained Republic was the least that would satisfy Sinn Fein. Anarchy reigned throughout the island. Policemen were assaulted and left dead in the public streets; law-abiding civilians, suspected by the rebels of hostility to the cause, were dragged from their beds and shot. Protests were unavailing; and it was clear that some sterner policy was overdue. Lord French went out as Viceroy; and presently the forces of the Crown began to turn the tables. Sinn Feiners were opposed by armed detachments. Fierce skirmishes ensued among the hedgerows. Machine-guns swept the streets; and (what did England little credit) reprisals were inflicted on the township or the village where outrage had occurred. Yet there were still reserves of British statesmanship to draw on; and,

when in 1921 a truce was called and negotiations opened with the Sinn Féin leaders, a generous compromise was soon effected. While Ulster was left free to join in or stand aloof, the rest of Ireland was accorded the full status of a Dominion Colony, self-governing in nearly all respects save allegiance to the Crown. Her recognition of that tie, perhaps, is more verbal than sincerely felt; yet, once the old grievance against England is removed, there is good hope that material interests will bind her to England more closely than ever in the past. For, sentimentalist though he be in the sphere of politics, the Irishman has also his commercial side; and he will learn quickly enough where his real interests lie.

Labour Troubles at Home.—It is a heavy load of cares without that England carries—the constant fear for Ireland, anxieties for India, administrative problems in a dozen new protectorates, and wide responsibilities in Europe too—yet who shall say but that her worst perils lie within? When hostilities were over, and her fighting men came home, Lloyd George assured them that they were returning to a new and better England, “a land fit for heroes to dwell in.” The sequel has been a mocking comment on that prophecy. For there, too, as in the larger world, the times seem out of joint. The “reconstruction,” so ardently discussed by politicians, has been a still-born project; and rhetoric is ill able to repair the wastage of the War. The fact is, that during four long years the nation’s wealth had been consumed without replacement. Human energies which should have gone to supply the needs of life had been spent on the manufacture of munitions. Millions and millions of money had been blown, so to speak, into space; and by just so much England was the poorer when peace at last returned. For a while indeed trade boomed; but such appearance of prosperity was deceptive. Foreign markets, so eager at first for goods, had now begun to fail. Her merchants could not sell; so factories stood idle; and the roll of unemployment, bringing want and suffering to millions, grew apace.

Yet economic factors are not alone responsible for the unrest and discontent which prevailed. For the cause goes deeper. The stream of life, once broken, will not readily flow back into accustomed channels; and men’s minds were profoundly unsettled by the unfamiliar experience of the War. Above all, among the workers there was an intense dissatisfaction with the existing inequalities of wealth and at the same time a growing consciousness of their own strength and importance. During the past few years they had seen in more ways than one that the country’s safety depended on themselves. Not merely at the Front, but in the workshop, they had held the keys of victory; and the Government, fearful of any stoppage which might interrupt supplies, had weakly pandered to their most extreme demands. So Labour had now come to fancy itself all-powerful and to imagine that the hour of its triumph was at hand. That other classes and other parties existed in the State was momentarily forgotten; but soon came a sharp reminder.

When at the close of 1918 Lloyd George appealed to the country for a renewed lease of power, he was enthusiastically hailed by the electorate as the man who won the War, and his Coalition was returned by an immense majority. It was soon evident, however, that, whatever its pretences, his ministry was strongly Conservative at heart. It stood for the preservation of the established order of society and showed but little sympathy for Labour's more extravagant demands. Thus cheated of their hope, the working class grew restive. An ugly temper of impatience was displayed; and, seeing how successfully the Bolsheviks in Russia had overthrown their capitalist oppressors, there was secret talk of copying their tactics at home. Even short of actual revolution, Labour had powerful weapons for overriding Parliament and enforcing its own will. A general strike, so the extremists argued, would win by "Direct Action" what indirect or constitutional action had so far failed to win. By such a method they proposed to dictate the country's policy, to force on the nationalization of the coal-mines, to secure more friendly treatment of Bolshevik Russia, and who shall say what else? It was a tempting project; but it went too far. For it threatened to undermine not merely Lloyd George's ministry, but the fundamental principles of representative government; and the mass of Englishmen are too good Democrats for that. Just when the extremists felt confident of victory, they found their followers deserting them; and, before the efficacy of "Direct Action" could be put to a practical test, it had been voted out of court.

Moderation Prevails.—But, if, as a political weapon, the strike was thus wisely eschewed, this was not to deny its legitimate use for the improvement of wages. On one point at least all sections of the workers were whole-heartedly agreed, that the profits of industry had gone in the past too much to the capitalist's pocket. A larger share henceforward they were determined should be theirs; and during the course of the War they had gone a long way towards attaining it. Wages had risen, because at such a time employers were naturally able to charge more for goods. So, while the cost of living doubled, wages had more than doubled; but, when in course of time the cost of living fell and the workers' wage was threatened with a like reduction, then indeed the trouble began. Labour was determined to retain the war-time increase and refused to be satisfied with a pre-war standard of life. Strikes followed thick and fast; and the resistance came to a head in the great coal miners' struggle of 1921. Plans were laid for marshalling Labour's forces in full strength. Railwaymen and transport workers were to come out in sympathy with the miners, and the "Triple Alliance" thus show a united front. But once again more moderate counsels triumphed and the grand coup failed. For the British working-man is not a fool. He demands a fair share in the national prosperity; but he knows well enough at the bottom of his heart that all the world alike is the poorer for the War, and that even his own wages cannot go unaffected, when the national prosperity declines. Treated as a

reasonable being, he will behave as such; and it is well sometimes to remember that he has not invariably been treated so. The bitterness and prejudice of present times spring from the injustice and repression of the past. The striker of to-day is but having his revenge upon the profiteer of yesterday; and the legitimate successes which Trades Unionism has achieved could never have been won by patient waiting. If the men have much to learn, so also have the masters; and, as it takes two to make a quarrel, it takes two equally to make a peace.

EPILOGUE

1921-27

I

Foreign Affairs.—Europe after three years of so-called peace was still a very distressful and distracted continent. Her problems were due in part to the dislocations and havoc of four years of war, but also in a large measure to those illusions and passions bred of the war, which only an increasingly bitter experience could avail to correct. The heart of the trouble lay in the mentality of France. Actually the most prosperous of European countries, she was nevertheless nervous, ill at ease and financially unstable. She refused to face a taxation adequate to her needs, balancing her yearly budgets on fantastic anticipations of the endless millions to be wrung from Germany. As a result her credit suffered. Months passed. Still reparation payment dallied; and doubts and fears began to rise. Though the Germans were industriously at work and began to seem even relatively prosperous, a rapid depreciation of their paper currency bade fair to produce financial chaos, and placed adequate reparation payments still further off than ever.

At length the French, exasperated by the deferment of their hopes, determined to put on the screw. In January of 1923 M. Poincaré, their ultra-conservative premier, marched an army into the great German coal-mining district of the Ruhr, and there proposed to take reparations in kind. The German miners, in other words, were to be made to work for France. French soldiers occupied the railways; French engineers supervised the mines; yet strange to say, the Germans did not work with a will. They went on strike, they idled, they even played tricks with machinery and railroad points. The culprits when caught were arrested; others on mere suspicion were evicted from their homes; the towns were terrorized; but still the output of coal was not what it should have been; and it soon became apparent that the actual gain to France would little more than cover the heavy expenses of the military occupation. In England meanwhile the whole adventure was being watched with sceptical anxiety. Since the Treaty of Versailles patient forbearance had been the keynote of the government's policy towards France; and

even now, though a strong protest was entered against the folly of the Ruhr, an open breach between the two allies was avoided. Such patience met its reward. By the end of spring, 1924, the French began to realize their mistake. There was a sharp fall in the franc, ominous enough when seen in the light of the German mark's recent collapse. M. Poincaré was thrown from office; and an administration of advanced radical views was formed under M. Herriot to clear up the mess. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Labour ministry, recently risen to power in England, was prepared to assist.

Both governments gladly availed themselves of the United States' offer to lend expert advisers for the final adjustment of the reparations problem and Germany's capacity to pay was now for the first time discussed in a truly practical manner; methods of payment were devised; and the scheme known after the name of the American representative, General Dawes, guaranteed not merely the future payment of fixed annual sums to France, but also the immediate stabilization of Germany's own insecure finances. Its acceptance, therefore, formed a solid foundation for the economic reconstruction of Europe. For hitherto, while the period of uncertainty and tension lasted, no one upon either side of the Rhine could know for certain how he stood.

To the French, however, the settlement meant much more than this. For them it marked the beginning of a far saner political outlook. Naturally nervous of an enemy who even after defeat appeared impenitent, and who, though now systematically disarmed, still decisively outnumbered her in man-power, France had been thinking at least as much of the future security of her frontiers as of the present solvency of her finance; and the means to that security she had set out to seek through armaments and military alliances. She herself had kept up an army far beyond her immediate peace needs; and beyond her frontiers she had cultivated the friendship of Poland and Czechoslovakia, thus striving to encompass Germany on the east as well as on the west with a ring of formidable enemies. Meanwhile to cover the vast sums expended not merely on her own, but on her new friends' armament, she had been compelled to borrow largely, professing herself the while incapable of meeting her former debts. The result of such reckless finance had been the franc's ominous fall; and the truth was slowly being brought home to French minds that armed force is the worst possible remedy for economic troubles. The practical object-lesson of the Ruhr failure was decisive; and henceforth France turned to seek other and more hopeful means of securing her frontiers against future German aggression. She bethought her of the League of Nations.

British Finances.—To England this change in the French attitude was doubly welcome. She had never enjoyed the task of preaching an abatement of reparation claims which was bound to hit her ally far worse than herself. Honest and business-like finance, however, she had consistently held to be the true key to economic recovery; nor, when sacrifices of her own were demanded, had she shrunk from them. It was

in this spirit that her government had met the claim of the American debt. In the early years of the war, and while the United States were still neutral, she had borrowed from them enormous sums, not so much for her own needs as to make loans in turn to her continental allies. When the United States entered the war at her side, it had been reasonable to hope that such past transactions would be written off; and now Britain proposed a general cancellation of all inter-allied indebtedness. The Americans, especially since their withdrawal from European entanglements, viewed the matter in a rather different light. They argued with some reason that a continent which could afford to maintain huge peace-time armaments, could at least afford to honour its obligations. The British Government, though not as yet receiving a penny from their continental creditors, resolved to set the example and pay up.

In 1923, Mr. Baldwin, their Chancellor of the Exchequer, was sent over to New York where he settled the terms for the gradual repayment of the debt, and so established beyond cavil the soundness of his country's financial position. The liabilities incurred during the war were slowly but surely being met. Alone among European countries, England was balancing her budgets year by year out of current taxation; her credit abroad stood high; and her reward was that in 1925 the pound sterling recovered its pre-war value of exchange. Of no other European currency can the same be even predicted. France, Italy, and others have indeed come to arrangements with Great Britain for the refunding of their debts; but, what she receives from them, is by no means equal to the annual sum which she sends over to America, and some hold that in her generosity to her allies she has gone beyond what she herself can afford. Nevertheless the economic rehabilitation of other countries is the surest means of return to universal prosperity; and for this, if for no other reason, British statesmanship was bound to keep close touch with the continent rather than repeat the policy of withdrawal adopted soon after the close of the Napoleonic wars. But other reasons and other responsibilities were far from being lost to sight; and not least of these was membership of the League of Nations.

The League of Nations.—Of the League's growing value successive British Governments have maintained a consistently high sense. Definite proofs of that value came quickly—the settlement of the Silesian frontier problem, arbitration in a territorial dispute between Finland and Sweden, the salving of Austria from financial bankruptcy, and perhaps most striking of all, the preservation of peace in more than one ugly crisis between the young states of east Europe. To such activities Britain lent full support; her Foreign Secretaries have, whenever possible, attended in person the Assembly of the League; and her Parliament has loyally backed them up. But she has also shown a wise caution in remembering that the League is still in its infancy and in desiring to put upon it no greater burdens than it can reasonably be expected to bear. The Greco-Italian crisis of 1923 affords a case in point. An Italian general was murdered on an Albanian frontier

investigation. Mussolini at once served an ultimatum to Athens, bombarded Corfu, and boastfully defied all protests from Geneva. Here, if ever, it seemed that the League's authority was about to be put to the test. But the matter was taken out of its hands. The leading powers' ambassadors, sitting in council at Paris, undertook the decision and without any adequate investigation of the facts inflicted a severe fine upon Greece. In this apparent blow to the League's prestige Great Britain was undoubtedly a leading partner; but a greater and more serious blow was probably averted by preventing Italy's threatened secession from the League. In any case Britain's caution made her unpopular with the smaller states of Europe; and presently it was to earn the disapproval also of the greater.

The Protocol and Locarno.—When on her withdrawal from the Ruhr adventure France turned her thoughts from the idea of securing her frontiers by a militarist supremacy, she directed them as we have said, towards the League. It needed at this moment no special acuteness of perception to realize that Europe was heading straight for a competition in armaments similar to that which just ten years earlier had led to the outbreak of the Great War. Some scheme of gradual or partial disarmament seemed imperative; but this could only be instituted on the basis of universal agreement and under the bond of some powerful guarantee. The suggestion was accordingly put forward at Geneva and embodied in a rough draft or Protocol that all members of the League should pledge themselves to maintain the existing frontiers of Europe, and, if any state's integrity were threatened, to come to its assistance. The Protocol had many friends, the French representative amongst them; but it found one implacable opponent in Great Britain. Among the grounds of her objection which were various, two stand out: first, that to maintain the existing frontiers in perpetuity may be neither just nor desirable; and second, that a pledge of intervention in distant parts of Europe is too much to expect of a country already loaded with the world-wide responsibilities of Great Britain; and still more is it too much to expect of those other members of the League whose opinion she is bound to consider, her Dominions. For this last reason, if for no other, she was forced to oppose her resistance to a formula, which however well sounding, seemed almost certain to fail, because it attempted too much. To the principle of a mutual guarantee, however, provided it were planned on less comprehensive lines, Great Britain held no such objection; and in the autumn of 1925 Sir Austen Chamberlain,¹ as Foreign Secretary, advanced a modified scheme. Meeting together at Locarno the representatives of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium agreed to the acceptance of a common pledge to maintain the existing frontiers between Germany and France on the one hand and between Germany and Belgium on the other. The importance of this diplomatic achievement is hard to overestimate. It seemed indeed to mark the final exorcism of the war

¹ Mr. Chamberlain was in point of fact knighted in honour of this event.

spirit; and, as a further token that old animosities were now to be forgotten, the operation of the Pact was made conditional on the admission of Germany into the League of Nations. That last act of reconciliation was unhappily delayed by the opposition of Brazil, who, piqued at her own exclusion from the League Council, refused to join in the unanimous vote essential to the new member's admission. But this rift was not lasting, and in due course Germany has been admitted once more into the great comity of nations.

France was now satisfied; a new sense of security was in the air; and it remained to press forward measures for a systematic disarmament. So far as land forces are concerned, serious difficulties still stand in the way; and discussions proceed slowly. But the limitation of navies had already made some progress. In 1921 on President Coolidge's initiative a conference had been held at Washington; and there the United States, Great Britain, France and Japan had agreed to a limitation of tonnage in respect of capital ships. The problem of cruisers and other craft had still to be threshed out; and in 1927 fresh discussions were opened at Geneva. Unhappily they proved fruitless. The American representatives failed to appreciate how widespread and how vital are the naval needs of the Imperial trade routes. The British Government, while accepting the United States' demand for naval equality, made perhaps too high an estimate of the extent of those needs. The only immediate result was that the British shipbuilding programme was soon after curtailed, the American enormously increased. But there is no need to despair or to suppose that the misunderstanding need last. Once the nations have agreed that war is an unmitigated disaster, bringing even to the victors far more harm than good, it must follow that the sole hope for the future lies in the spirit of mutual cooperation, in methods of friendly give and take rather than of hostile rivalry. It remains therefore to hammer out the details of the compromise, to devise the machinery of arbitration, and finally to learn in the practical school of experience that self-interest is in the long run better served by seeking international justice than by the old-fashioned methods of diplomatic overreaching and bluff.

II

Home Politics.—It has long been an accepted tradition of British politics that continuity of foreign policy should be independent of the alternations of party government; and to this rule the history of the last six years affords no serious exception. Each in their turn, the Foreign Secretaries of successive ministries have played their part and earned their share of credit in the hopeful developments above described. Thus it was Lord Curzon's steadfast dignity that averted at many a crisis the threatened breach with France; Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's unaffected friendliness of manner did much to smooth the path towards Franco-German reconciliation and the acceptance of the Dawes' repa-

tion scheme. Sir Austen Chamberlain, as we have shown, was mainly responsible for the triumph of Locarno. Nor, when we come in turn to consider the course of home politics, is the divergence between party programmes so wide as might be fancied. The Conservative Party, who have held office for five years out of the six, have taken an increasingly broadminded view of their responsibilities and have embraced policies which their predecessors would have denounced as rank Socialism. They have controlled rents, regulated prices, maintained an unemployment dole upon an unprecedented scale, vastly extended the scope of Old Age and other pensions, and finally by state support of building schemes have done at least as much as their opponents ever could, for the solution of the Housing Shortage problem. The Labour Party, on the other hand, though often wild enough in opposition, proved comparatively mild when in office. The attitude of their ministers was for the most part cautiously correct. Mr. MacDonald showed a high sense of his responsibilities abroad. Mr. Snowden's budget was more Liberal than Socialist in tone. Mr. Thomas at the Colonial office became quickly a thorough-going Imperialist. Even the rank and file of Labour members have grown steadier with time; and the Communist Extremists, when seeking admission to the Party, have met with polite, but continuous rebuff.

In one tragic and conspicuous respect there has equally been little to choose between the two parties; and for the country's acutest trouble neither Conservatives nor Labour have proved able to do much. The number of unemployed in receipt of a weekly dole still continues well above a million; and, though trade has shown at times some sign of an improvement, yet national enterprise must remain at least partially crippled, so long as the profits of the more successful industries are bled for the support of the employees of the less. The Labour Party, it is true, had no great opportunity for introducing socialist schemes of state organization; for their tenure of office was limited to a twelve-month; and during all that time they were dependent for a majority vote on the support and good-will of the Liberals. No heroic or comprehensive remedies have figured in the Conservatives' programme; their aim was twofold—first, in order that industry might, so far as possible, recover of itself, they endeavoured to hasten the return to normal conditions both at home and abroad, by tranquillizing the economic unsettlement of Europe, by restoring British credit on foreign exchange, by checking the extravagance of State expenditure and so lowering taxation, by curtailing (though this proved more difficult) the ruinous interruption of strikes. Secondly, they looked for a more positive solution to the problem in the sphere of Imperial relationships. At no time in British history has the Empire attracted more interest or attention. The Prince of Wales has made a tour of the Dominions. The Prime Minister has for the first time visited Canada. In 1924 a vast exhibition of Colonial products was held outside London at Wembley. Millions of folk visited it. School children received special instruction and were taken in hordes to its sights. From these and

many other signs it is clear that the responsibilities and opportunities of the Empire are being more and more widely realized. Positive and practical results, however, are less easy to see. Emigration of the surplus unemployed population appears impossible on any large scale. For the British working man accustomed to the conditions of industrial home-life, is not very eager nor perhaps very competent to work on the land; and the Dominions themselves cannot readily absorb indefinite numbers. There remains one other possibility. It was an old idea of the Conservative Party, as we saw some time back, by establishing a tariff of duties on imports to give special encouragement to colonial trade through a preferential scale of exemptions. Since the electorate's rejection of the scheme in 1905, it had been left more or less in abeyance; but there were still many of the Conservative members who were ardent Protectionists and who saw in "Imperial Preference" the key to the restoration of British trade. Approval however would be needed on both sides of the ocean; much therefore turned on the views of colonial statesmen and how they regarded the question we must now consider.

The events of the war had exercised a two-fold influence upon the relations between the colonies and the home country. On the one hand, the part played by the Dominions both in the conduct of campaigns and in the negotiations of the Peace Treaty had greatly enhanced their sense of political independence. They had secured for themselves separate representation in the League of Nations; and at the Imperial Conferences held in London in 1923 and 1926 they asserted quite definitely the right to decide for themselves how far they should be bound by the foreign policy of the British Parliament. Thus while still acknowledging an allegiance, they declared their virtual autonomy. The children, in other words, were come to man's estate. This did not mean, however, that they wished to repudiate their parent. On the contrary, the second effect of wartime experience had been to strengthen the ties of sentiment which already helped to bind the Empire together; and further to develop those ties by economic links of commercial independence now appeared an advantageous and obvious step. So it came about that at the Imperial Conference of 1923 Mr. Bruce, the Australian premier, advocated the institution of a Preferential tariff, favouring the importation of colonial produce to England. Here then was the Conservative Party's old remedy receiving fresh stimulus from an important quarter. Better trade would mean less unemployment; and the policy was at once adopted as part of the Conservatives' immediate programme. Its possible effect, however, remains an unknown quantity; for the history of 1905 was now to repeat itself and the Electorate would have none of the scheme. To understand how this came about, it will be necessary to review briefly the history of the successive governments of the period; and to this we must now turn.

Lloyd George and Bonar Law.—Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition government, elected with an enormous majority soon after the Armistice, was not to survive very long. England has never much loved coalitions;

and this one proved no exception to the rule. It had been formed with the idea that as it had best organized war, so it could also best organize peace; but the results had proved disappointing. Promises of speedy reconstruction were not justified by three years of office. The personal ascendancy, too, of Mr. Lloyd George began to lose some of its glamour. His enthusiasm and energy remained, it is true, unabated; but his political judgment seemed often at fault. Thus, when the Greeks invaded Asia Minor, and drove back the Turks on the interior, he was loud in admiration of their prowess. Then shortly after, when the Turks returned the attack with interest, and it seemed as though Constantinople, still under occupation of allied garrisons, might fall into the hands of their troops, he came within an ace of plunging into war with them. The time had come, so the Conservative members of the coalition felt, to shake free from the domination of a leader whom they no longer trusted. In the autumn of 1922 the split came. Mr. Lloyd George resigned; and Mr. Bonar Law took office with a Conservative majority which, after a general election, numbered eighty over both other parties. Next spring when failing health compelled his retirement, he was succeeded in the Premiership by Mr. Baldwin, lately sprung into prominence through his successful negotiation of the American debt, but otherwise little known to the country. Though lacking the constructive imagination of a Lloyd George, Mr. Baldwin commanded respect by his cultured benevolence and singular honesty of purpose. Himself an industrial employer, he knew something at first hand of the urgency and difficulty of industrial problems; and, what was more, he had a real sympathy with the troubles of the men as well as of the master. The revival of trade he rightly saw to be the only true remedy for unemployment; and at the Imperial Conference of the autumn he was converted in the way above mentioned to the views of his Protectionist colleagues. At the recent election, however, Mr. Bonar Law had given a pledge that, if elected to office, the Conservative Party would not tamper with the existing Free Trade; and Mr. Baldwin's conscience compelled him, before taking further action, to submit the question to a fresh test of the Electorate. The result, as we have foreshadowed, was a complete débâcle for his party, though neither Labour nor Liberals taken apart had anything near a majority, yet together they outnumbered the Conservatives by just ninety votes. So Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, counting on the support of Mr. Asquith and the Liberals, formed for the first time a ministry of what was now coming to be called the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Administration.—The members of the new government, raw for the most part to administrative responsibility, and some of them men of indifferent education, were quite sufficiently occupied in finding their feet without indulging in any wild experiments. Their dependence on the Liberal vote indeed gave them small latitude; and on the whole they acquitted themselves of a difficult task with success. Of Mr. MacDonald's activities as Foreign Secretary—an office which he combined with the Premiership—we have already spoken, and Mr. Snowden as

Chancellor of the Exchequer showed a sane and moderate outlook on the country's financial problems. The real trouble came not from any incapacity of the Socialist leaders, but from the impetuosity and lack of discipline among the rank and file of members. One definite plank in the new government's programme had been the recognition of the Soviet Republic and they had opened negotiations in London for a commercial agreement whereby it was hoped to revive trade with Russia through the granting of a loan to that impoverished country. The Bolshevik delegates proved, however, obstinate bargainers and towards autumn the conference broke down. Private Labour members thoughtlessly rushed to the rescue, and without official authority engineered the resumption of parleys. To have gone to work thus behind the government's back was a grave breach of parliamentary procedure, and the Liberals no less than the Conservatives were at once up in arms. Neither of them liked the Russian treaty; and the Socialists' overthrow seemed imminent. It actually came over another and more trifling issue—the government's alleged unconstitutional action in withdrawing the prosecution of a Socialist editor. But in the general election which followed it was the Russian question which bulked most large. The Anti-Bolshevik cry, raised by the Conservative candidates, was reinforced in a singular manner. There found its way somehow into the government's hands and still more mysteriously into the Press, a secret dispatch from Moscow, known as the "Zinovieff letter," which instructed Russian agents to foment sedition among English workers and soldiers. Though the letter was denounced as a forgery by the Russians themselves, its audacious interference in the country's affairs shocked the electorate greatly and the upshot was that the Socialists were thrown from office and the Conservatives returned with an overwhelming majority of two hundred and more. The Liberals, with a bare membership of forty, suffered virtual extinction.

This was a surprising reversal of the verdict given only twelve months before and many explanations have been given. For one thing, the women's vote—introduced by the new franchise bill of 1917—was still an altogether unknown and uncertain quantity. There can be little doubt that the growing activity of women in public life is one of the most notable features of the age. Female members of Parliament, female county councillors, and female workers of every sort have aroused among their sex a new interest in politics. All parties would naturally like to think that the women's vote favours themselves; and the Conservatives have recently been contemplating a bill for lowering the age limit of female franchise from thirty to twenty-one. It was further a significant but not uncommon feature of the poll that the total number of votes given to the Conservatives bore no real relation to the enormous majority with which they were returned to power, and in point of fact their members could only claim to represent considerably less than half of the electorate. Nevertheless the verdict given probably reflected in a broad way the opinion of the country. There was no desire either

for the rash experiment in Socialist legislation which a true Labour majority would have threatened nor yet for conciliatory dealings with foreign revolutionary theorists who had already brought their own country to the verge of ruin. When, therefore, Mr. Baldwin at the opening of 1925 promised a period of tranquillity, he was striking the desired note. By a curious irony of fate however tranquillity was precisely what Mr. Baldwin could not give.

The General Strike.—The gradual economic recovery of the continent should by now have been reflected also in a renewal of English prosperity; and there were signs indeed that trade was improving. But one industry in particular was hard hit. The reparation deliveries of German coal to France seriously affected the market of British coal exporters; for this and other causes the mines of South Wales and elsewhere were in great difficulties; and in the summer of 1925 the owners gave warning of an impending reduction of wages. The men answered this by threat of strike; and the government, intervening in the public interest, was only able to avert this catastrophe by the appointment of a Royal Commission of enquiry and the promise of a subsidy to maintain the old level of wages until the Commission's Report was complete. Next March the Report appeared. It ruled out any continuance of the subsidy as economically unsound. It enjoined on the owners certain reconstruction of their somewhat haphazard industry, and finally it demanded of the men a necessary reduction of wages. This last recommendation roused the fierce denunciation of the entire Labour world, which felt with justice that the miners' wages were already low enough. A General Strike was threatened; and despite the Government's persistent efforts, they were unable to effect a compromise. The owners declared themselves unable to pay the old wages; the men refused to accept a penny less. At the beginning of May the General Strike was called; and the Labour leaders confidently counted on bringing the Government swiftly to its knees. They had reckoned however without two things—the Government's careful organization for the maintenance of supplies and the cool imperturbability of the British Public. Even in the great towns there was no serious rioting. Motor lorries, driven by volunteers, carried food supplies; a government newspaper was printed and distributed likewise by volunteer labour; and within a few days an adequate train service was running. The grand coup had in fact failed; and with commendable sense the Labour Leaders recognized the failure, and called off the strike at the end of nine days. The miners held on alone; and finally in autumn returned piecemeal to work on local agreements, often far less favourable than had been offered in spring. From the serious dislocation caused by the coal stoppage, British industry and trade took long to recover; but the General Strike itself had at least the one good effect of clearing the air. For years the country had suffered under the threat of its occurrence, uneasily ignorant of what the results might be. Now by calling Labour's bluff, the government had once and for all laid the bogey, and had

proved that the social stability of Britain was not to be undermined by the agitations, however well organized, of a minority. A Bill passed through Parliament in the following year declared such general conspiracy to withhold Labour to be in principle illegal; and, though the Socialists in Parliament blustered with indignation, it was clear that Labour, as a whole, had also learnt its lesson from the strike. A calmer and saner temper prevails. Agitators are less in evidence; and with the close of 1927 an invitation to confer with leading industrial magnates for the better organization of national production has been accepted by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. The prospects of peace in industry have never been so bright since the century began.

The Baldwin Administration.—The truth is that Mr. Baldwin's administration, though lacking perhaps in great constructive ability, has probably interpreted aright the country's chief need at the moment. It has aimed at governing with a firm hand, not as in Italy through the domination of a narrow political clique, but by methods of enlightened and evenhanded justice. Throughout the spheres of foreign and imperial policy, the beneficial results are markedly to be seen. The dishonest intrigues of the Bolshevik government of Russia have been wisely rewarded by a severance of diplomatic relations. The threatened destruction of British settlements in China where the welter of civil war has already done grave injury to trade, has been averted by the timely dispatch of a defensive garrison. The demands of an inefficient Egyptian government for the control of the Sudan have been successfully rebutted. The endless and dangerous quarrel between Ulster and the Irish Free State over the delimitation of their frontiers has been brought to an amicable settlement by a generous financial sacrifice on the part of the British Exchequer. In South Africa the national aspirations of a strong Dutch secessionist party have been watched with patient tolerance; and such patience has at least been rewarded in the recent decision whereby the factious agitation against the use of the British Flag has ended in a reasonable compromise. In India, despite endless discouragement and difficulty, the government has been carried forward strongly along the lines of the "Dyarchical Constitution." Indian members of the administration have sometimes obstructed business, sometimes deliberately withdrawn their attendance and washed their hands of all responsibility; and now, when a Commission has been duly appointed to investigate the workings of the present system and pronounce upon the further extension of Indian self-government, many Indians threaten to boycott its enquiries. Nevertheless, if one thing is certain, it is that the Commission will proceed.

Last, but by no means least, at a time when the great Dominions are ceasing to lean upon the mother country and striking out on independent lines of their own, Great Britain is discovering and undertaking new and heavy responsibilities in other quarters. The vast tracts of tropical Africa which have come under her control either by right of

occupation or, more recently, under mandate from the League of Nations, present problems of organization and administration equal perhaps, if India be excepted, to any she has shouldered in the past. Millions of coloured peoples are now looking to British culture and British justice to bring them the benefits of civilization, while excluding, if possible, its evils; and, as the deliberations of recent colonial conferences have shown, they will not be allowed to look in vain. The load is heavy for a country already burdened with numerous and critical problems of her own. But, though critics may croak of coming ruin, Great Britain has still within her vast reserves of vitality and strength. The mood of war weariness is passing; all classes are awaking to a fuller sense of the perils and the opportunities ahead of them; and the democratic basis of a society which, without refusing due honour to merit, admits of a continuous recruitment of strength from below to its upper ranks, is a sure guarantee against that staleness or degeneracy of fibre which has so often proved fatal to great empires of the past. He would be a rash prophet who at the outset of the year 1928 would assert that England's mission in the world is ended.

PART V
SUMMARIES
AND
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE EARLY AND MIDDLE AGES

EXTERNAL.		KINGS.	A.D.	INTERNAL.
Barbarians overrun Roman Empire		Claudius	50	ROMAN OCCUPATION.
			100	
		Hadrian	150	
			200	
			250	
			300	
			350	
			400	
		Edwin	450	ANGLO-SAXON CONQUEST.
			500	
			550	
			600	Christianity arrives.
			650	NORTHUMBRIAN SUPREMACY.
			700	
			750	
Charlemagne, Emperor of Western Europe		Offa	800	MERCIAN SUPREMACY.
			850	
		Egbert	850	WESSEX SUPREME.
			900	
		Edward Athelstan	950	WESSEX AND DANES DIVIDE ENGLAND.
			950	
		Edgar Ethelred	1000	DANISH KINGS.
			1050	
		Cnut Confessor	1050	
			1100	
Crusades	{ Normandy ruled jointly with England { Western France inherited by Henry II { Western France lost by John	{ William I { William II { Henry I { Stephen	1100	NORMANS SUPPRESS ENGLISH.
			1150	
			1200	
			1250	
		{ Henry II { Richard John { Henry IV { Edward I	1250	Magna Charta. RISE OF ENGLISH NATION.
			1300	
			1350	
			1400	
		{ Edward II { Edward III { Richard II { Henry IV	1400	Wycliffe.
			1450	
			1500	
			1500	
100 Years' War	{ Partial victory of Edward III { Northern France won by Henry V { Northern France lost by Henry VI	{ Henry V { Henry VI { Edward IV { Richard III	1450	LANCASTRIAN USURPATION.
			1500	
			1500	
			1500	
		{ Henry VII { Henry VIII { Edward VI { Mary I { Elizabeth I { Elizabeth II	1500	WARS OF ROSES. Rise and fall of YORKISTS.
			1500	
			1500	
			1500	
			1500	
			1500	

SUMMARIES

NOTE.—The more important dates are given in black-faced type

PART I

I. [1000 B.C.—A.D. 60]

I. Early Inhabitants

- (a) From 1000 B.C. onwards the island was invaded by successive waves of Celtic tribes, *fair, tall*, and akin in speech and customs to the Celtic Gauls.
- (b) Mingling with a *short, dark* race of earlier inhabitants, these formed the British type: and gave its name to Britain.
- (c) They lived by agriculture and trade in tin, etc.: were taught by Druids to worship the sun at *Stonehenge* and elsewhere: lived in scattered villages under tribal chiefs.

II. Caesar's Invasion

- 55 B.C. (i) *Julius Caesar*, after conquering Gaul, makes a brief reconnaissance of Britain.
- 54 B.C. (ii) Lands a larger army at *Deal*: defeats Britons at *River Stour*: opposed on Thames by *Caswallon* (*Cassivellaunus*), King of *Catuvellauni*: but forces passage at *Brentford*.
- (iii) Imposes light terms (tribute, etc.) and returns to Gaul.

[Interval of nearly a century.]

III. Permanent Occupation

- A.D. 43 (i) **Conquest.**
Under Emperor *Claudius*, *Aulus Plautius* defeats Britons in Essex. and drives *Caractacus*, King of *Catuvellauni*, into Wales.
- (ii) **Occupation.**
Caractacus captured: Western frontier line formed by forts at *Isca*, *Ureconium*, and *Deva*: roads begun: colony of discharged soldiers founded at *Camulodunum*: trade centre at *Verulamium*.
- A.D. 61 (iii) **Revolt and Subjection.**
Suetonius Paulinus attacks *Mona* as being Druids' centre. Meanwhile *Iceni* under *Boadicea* rise and sack *Verulamium*, etc.: but are defeated by *Paulinus*.

Britain thus finally subdued.

II. [A.D. 80–600]

- I. ROME'S DOUBLE TASK:** (A) To secure northern frontier,
(B) To civilise inhabitants.

A. Northern Frontier

- 78 (i) *Agricola*, as governor, subdues *Brigantes*: pushes into Scotland: defeats *Caledonii* near *Firth of Tay*: but withdraws to line of *Solway Firth* and *River Tyne*.

- 120 (ii) Emperor *Hadrian* builds turf wall from *Tyne* to *Solway*, nearly 80 miles long, garrisoned by legions.
- 140 (iii) Under *Antoninus* attempt made to hold line of *Firth of Forth* and *Clyde*: but again a withdrawal follows to *Hadrian's* line: wall rebuilt in stone.

B. Civilisation

- (a) Towns: schools: Roman dress and speech: and (later) Christianity.
- (b) Roads to military bases (see Map).
- (c) Britons lose vigour and power of self-defence.

II. FALL OF ROME AND COMING OF ANGLO-SAXONS

- 407 (i) Last Roman legion called elsewhere to meet attacks of *Visigoths*.
- 449 (ii) *Picts* from Scotland and *Scots* from Ireland plunder and return home.
- (iii) *Jutes* under *Hengist* and *Horsa* settle in *Kent*.
- 450- (iv) *Angles* and *Saxons* settle in *Sussex*: *Wessex*: *Essex*: *East*
- 550 *Anglia*: and last, *Northumbria*. [*N.B.*—More fertile country occupied first.]
- (v) Britons driven into *Wales*, *Cornwall*, and *Strathclyde*: and by battles of *Deorham* (577) and *Chester* (613) these remnants are cut off from each other.
- N.B.*—The Anglo-Saxons take few prisoners: destroy towns: and blot out Roman civilisation and Christianity.

III. [A.D. 600-850]

THE THREE GREAT KINGDOMS: *Northumbria*, *Mercia*, *Wessex*.
 [*N.B.*—Political unity based on supremacy of one kingdom is aided by *Religious Unity*.]

A. Northumbrian Supremacy [c. 620 onwards]

A. Conversion from Rome

- 597
- c. 620 (i) *Edwin* founds *Edinburgh*: takes *Anglesey* and becomes *Bretwalda* over most of Britain.
- (ii) *Edwin* beaten and killed by *Penda* of *Mercia*.
- (iii) But *Edwin's* successors regain supremacy and hold it till 685.
- (i) Pope *Gregory* sends *St. Augustine* who converts *Aethelbert* of *Kent*.
- (ii) *Paulinus* converts *Edwin* of *Northumbria*.
- (iii) But *Northumbria*, overrun by heathen *Mercia*, gives up Christianity.

B. Conversion from Irish Celts

- (i) Celts turn to Scotland in preference to barbarous Saxons and found monastery at *Iona*.
- (ii) From here, at invitation of *Edwin's* successor, *Aidan* founds *Lindisfarne* monastery. *Northumbria* reconverted and *Mercia* follows.

Quarrel and Union of the Churches

- (i) Jealousy between "Roman" Church in South and "Celtic" Church in North.

B. Mercian Supremacy

[c. 720 onwards]

- (i) Under Christian kings Mercia rises and overcomes Wessex.
- c. 780 (ii) Greatest king is *Offa*, contemporary of Charlemagne, and builder of dyke against Welsh.
- (ii) At Conference of *Whitby* King *Oswy* of Northumbria decides for Rome, and union is attained.
- (iii) *Theodore of Tarsus*, appointed Archbishop, organizes the Sees, etc.

C. Supremacy of Wessex

[c. 820 onwards]

- 825 (i) *Egbert* of Wessex defeats Mercia at *Ellandun*.
- (ii) Becoming *Bretwalda* gives whole country name of Angle-land or England.

IV. [850-900]

ALFRED AND THE DANISH INVASIONS**A. Before Alfred**

- c. 800 (i) Danes or "Northmen," aroused by Charlemagne's attack, begin to scour the seas.
- (ii) Make descents on England, Mediterranean countries, and Normandy where they later settle.
- c. 870 (iii) They overrun Northumbria, E. Anglia, and even cross Thames into Wessex.

B. Alfred's Reign (871-900)

- 871 (i) On his accession Alfred buys Danes out of Wessex.
- 876 (ii) Danes by surprise attack seize *Wareham*, but escape by treachery.
- 878 (iii) Breaking truce again, Danes fortify camp at *Chippenham* and scour Wessex.
- 878 (iv) Alfred flees to *Athelney*: rallies forces and defeats Danes at *Ethandun*.
- " (v) *Guthrum* accepts baptism and by Treaty of *Wedmore* divides England with Alfred.
- 892 (vi) Fresh host under *Hastings*, invading from France, caught at River *Lea* and fleet captured.

C. Alfred's Reforms

- (i) *Military* forces in towns: builds fleet: improves army by increasing number of *Thegns* (body-guard) and working *Fyrd* (militia) in relays.
- (ii) *Civil and Religious*.
 - (a) Organizes royal expenditure.
 - (b) Collects and encourages advisers, scholars, and craftsmen.
 - (c) Stimulates education by founding schools and translating Latin books into Anglo-Saxon (begins Anglo-Saxon Chronicle).
 - (d) Issues Code of Laws, fixing fines, etc.
 - (e) Plans monasteries at Winchester and Athelney for monks under strict Benedictine rule.

V. SAXONS, DANES AND NORMANS [900-1065]

A. Period of Saxon Ascendancy [100 years]

- 925 (i) Alfred's son, *Edward the Elder*, recovers Danelaw.
 937 (ii) *Athelstan* defeats rebellious Danes, aided by Scots and Irish Vikings, at *Brunanburgh*.
 959- (iii) *Edgar*, guided by Archbishop *Dunstan*, unites Danes and Saxons
 975 and becomes overlord of whole country.
 (iv) *Ethelred*, attacked by *Olaf Trygvasson* and *Sweyn*, King of Denmark, buys them off with "Danegeld": but provokes fresh invasion by massacring Danish settlers on *St. Brice's Day*.
 1002
 1011 (v) *Sweyn* is offered the crown and *Ethelred* flees.

B. Period of Danish Kings [40 years]

- 1016 (i) On *Sweyn's* death crown given to his son *Cnut* in preference to to *Ethelred's* son *Edmund Ironside*.
 1035 (ii) *Cnut* rules Denmark and England strongly, uniting Danes and Saxons by fair treatment.
 1042 (iii) His two sons proving feeble, *Witan* offers crown to *Ethelred's* son, *Edward the Confessor*.

C. Period of Saxon Recovery and Norman Intrigue [25 years]

- (i) The *Confessor*, thanks to his Norman mother and long sojourn abroad, encourages Norman favourites.
 (ii) *William, Duke of Normandy*, plans to be accepted as the *Confessor's* heir.
 (iii) Norman intrigues opposed by *Godwin, Earl of Wessex*, who controls East Anglia and S.W. Midlands through his sons and marries his daughter to the *Confessor*.
 1051 (iv) *Godwin* exiled for refusing to punish murder of Norman knights at Dover.
 1052 (v) *Godwin* returns: on his death all chief earldoms (except *Mercia*, which is under *Edwin* and *Morcar*) go to his sons: *Wessex* to *Harold: E. Anglia* to *Leofwine* and *Gurth: Northumbria* to *Tostig*.

VI. HASTINGS

A. Possible Claimants to Confessor's Throne

- (i) *Edgar the Atheling*, best legal claim as member of *Edmund Ironside's* family: but a boy.
 (ii) *Harold Godwinson*, brother-in-law of *Confessor*—foremost man in England: but *not* of royal blood.
 (iii) *William of Normandy*, first cousin to *Confessor* (through *Confessor's* Norman mother).

N.B.—The *Confessor's* promise of crown and *Harold's* oath of fealty gave him a show of right which was recognised by the Pope.

B. Events of 1066

- 5th (i) *Confessor* dies: *Harold*, though accepted by *Witan* and crowned
 Jan., is not sure of support for his "usurpation".
 1066 (ii) *William* prepares invasion.
 (iii) Meanwhile *Tostig*, *Harold's* brother, being driven out of his earldom by Northumbrians, is returning with fleet and army of *Hardrada*, King of Norway.

C. Harold's Marches

21st September, *Thursday*: *Tostig* and *Hardrada*, having beaten northern levies, occupy York; on following *Monday* *Harold*, coming up from south, annihilates them at *Stamford Bridge*.

- 28th September, *Thursday*: William lands at *Pevensey*. On following *Monday* news reaches Harold at *York*.
 5th October, *Thursday*: Harold on eve of reaching London (200 miles covered between Monday and Friday), where he refits, but does not await levies of *Edwin* and *Morcar*.
 12th October, *Thursday*: Harold leaves London and covers sixty miles to *Senlac* by Friday night.
 1066 14th October, *Saturday*: William, marching from coastal base at *Hastings*, attacks Saxons at *Senlac*.

D. The Battle

[*N.B.*—Saxons = old style **Infantry**: mailed House Carles and raw ill-armed Fyrd. Norman's chief arm **Cavalry** of mailed knights.]

I. Unsuccessful Norman Attacks.

- (a) Though preceded by archers and infantry, Norman knights fail to break Saxon line (behind *palisade*).
- (b) Fyrd on Saxon right pursue downhill and are badly mauled.
- (c) Normans renew attack, but by mid-afternoon make no impression.

II. William's two ruses.

- (a) By feigning flight Normans draw out Fyrd and destroy them.
- (b) Archers shake House Carles by aiming arrows high.
- (c) On Harold's death, House Carles round standard dispersed in utter rout.

1066 Christmas day, William crowned at Westminster.

VII. THE CONQUEROR AND HIS SUBJECTS

A. Saxons

[*N.B.*—All landowners deprived of lands: but some (e.g., those absent from *Hastings*) reinstated.]

Revolts.

- 1067 (i) *Southwest* revolts during William's absence in Normandy: *Exeter* surrenders on his return.
- 1068 (ii) *Midlands* revolt, but soon collapse: *Edwin* and *Morcar* made prisoner.
- 1069 (iii) *Northumberland* rises (with aid of King of Denmark) under Saxon Earl *Waltheof*: all country north of Humber laid waste by William.
- 1071 (iv) *Hereward the Wake* holds out in *Ely fens*: but is betrayed by monks.

B. Normans

[*N.B.*—Normans, etc., who have come over as volunteers with William, rewarded with lands: but they are strictly controlled by various measures.]

- (i) Each man's *estates* scattered through various counties (except Earldoms on Welsh border and Durham on Scots border).
- (ii) Castles not to be built without leave: strongest castles (e.g. Tower of London) kept in William's hands.
- (iii) New *feudal oath* exacted (first at Salisbury in 1086) whereby every man in England owes fealty *directly* to the King.
- (iv) *Domesday* survey made to give details of every man's property for purposes of taxation, etc.
- (v) Speedy but merciful suppression of revolt; when Earls of Hereford and Norfolk combined with Saxon *Waltheof*, the Normans were not executed, the Saxon was.

1087 William dies.

VIII. THE CONQUEROR'S SONS:

Robert; William Rufus (1087-1100); Henry I (1100-1135)

	Normandy	England	Church
1087	Robert inherits Dukedom.	Rufus succeeds and crushes revolt of <i>Odo</i> , Earl of Kent, by calling out Saxons.	Death of Pope <i>Gregory VII</i> (Hildebrand).
1089			Archbishopric of Canterbury falls vacant.
1091	Robert, after selling Côtentin to Henry, is forced to cede part of Normandy to Rufus.	Rufus defeats Scots and fixes frontier at Solway.	Anselm appointed Archbishop: quarrels with Rufus about lands and feudal homage.
1093			Anselm at Rome consulting Pope.
1096	Robert sells rest of lands to Rufus and goes on First Crusade.	Death of William Rufus.	
1100	Robert returning makes bid for English throne, but is bought off by Henry.	Henry I seizes throne: issues Charter and conciliates Saxons by wedding Saxon princesses. Henry crushes <i>Robert of Bellême</i> with aid of Saxons. [Henry reforms Law: stricter penalties. King's court as model for local courts.]	Henry crowned in Anselm's absence: Anselm on his return denounces coronation and refuses homage. Anselm leaves country again.
1102			Compromise of Bec. (i) Bishops to do homage to King for lands; (ii) but to receive spiritual authority from Rome.
1106	Henry defeats Robert at <i>Tenchebrai</i> and takes over Normandy.		
1120		Henry's only son drowned on <i>White Ship</i> .	
1135		Henry dies , leaving the crown to his daughter Matilda .	

IX. FROM ANARCHY TO ORDER

I. CLAIMANTS TO THRONE ON DEATH OF HENRY I

- (i) Matilda, daughter of Henry I, now married to *Geoffrey, Count of Anjou*, and mother of an infant son (afterwards Henry II).
- (ii) Stephen of Blois, son of the Conqueror's daughter, accepted as an easy-going king.

II. THE ANARCHY [1135 to 1154]

1135 A. Stephen Crowned, Matilda Plots his Overthrow

Revolts.

- 1137 (i) On Matilda's behalf *David, King of Scotland*, invades North: but defeated by Archbishop of York at *Northallerton* (Battle of the Standard).
- (ii) *Robert, Earl of Gloucester*, Matilda's half-brother, raises the West in revolt.
- 1139 (iii) By imprisoning two bishops Stephen alienates the Church and his brother *Henry, Bishop of Winchester*.
- 1141 Soon after Matilda's landing Stephen defeated and captured at *Lincoln*.

B. Matilda's Misuse of Victory

- 1141 (i) Matilda accepted as ruler, though not given title of queen.
- (ii) Matilda arouses Londoners by high-handed measures.
- (iii) Robert of Gloucester captured and only freed by *Stephen's* liberation.

C. The Coming of Henry

- 1153 Henry, Matilda's son, now of age, comes to England: and by *Treaty of Wallingford* receives share of Stephen's power and promise of succession.

III. HENRY II [1154]

A. His Domains

As Stephen's heir inherits **England**.

As grandson of Henry I (Matilda's father): **Normandy and Maine**.

As son of Geoffrey (Matilda's husband): **Anjou and Touraine**.

As husband of Eleanor of Aquitaine: **Aquitaine**.

- 1166 Also acquires **Brittany** by marrying his son to heiress.

B. His Reforms

[Keynote = one law for all and all power centred on king.]

- (i) *Taxation*: merchants and town-dwellers to pay as well as land-owners.
- (ii) *Military Service* to King demanded of all free men (Assize of Arms, 1181).
- (iii) *Local Law Courts* standardized by
 - (a) Model of King's Court.
 - (b) Travelling Judges of Assize.
 - (c) *Juries* to decide whether case should come before judges [Ordeal and Compurgation still linger].

C. His Quarrel with Becket

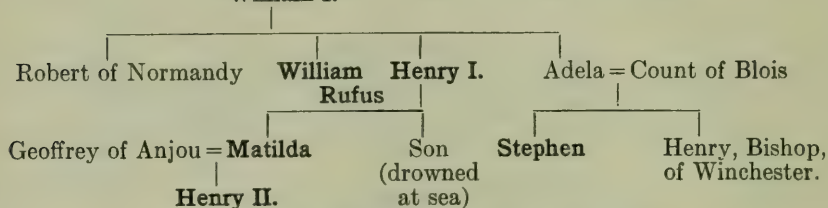
- 1162 (i) Wishing to bring "clerics" under civil law, appoints his Chancellor Becket to Canterbury.

- 1164 (ii) By *Constitutions of Clarendon*, a "cleric" convicted in church courts is afterwards to be tried and punished in lay courts.
 (iii) Becket denounces *Constitutions* at Northampton and departs to Pope.
 (iv) In Becket's absence Henry has his son crowned in advance by other Bishops.
 1170 (v) Becket on his return angers Henry by excommunication of offending Bishops and is murdered.
 (vi) Outcry of public causes Henry to withdraw *Constitutions* of Clarendon.

D. Troubles of Last Years

- 1171 (i) *Irish wars* to back up Earl of Pembroke (Strongbow): Henry crosses to Ireland and receives homage of chiefs.
 (ii) *His sons' Revolt in France*.
 1173 (a) His sons Henry and Richard, egged on by Queen Eleanor, rebel, but are suppressed.
 1187 (b) Richard, backed by **Philip Augustus** of France, forces Henry to humiliating peace. John also implicated. Henry dies, 1189.

William I.



X. RICHARD COEUR DE LION (1189-1199)

CRUSADES

A. Seizure and Loss of Jerusalem by Turks

- (i) Since 635 Jerusalem in hands of Arabs, who encourage Christian pilgrims.
 1076 (ii) Turks capture Jerusalem, obstructing and maltreating pilgrims.
 (iii) *Peter the Hermit* raises volunteers in France.
 (iv) *Pope Urban* holds Council at Clermont and declares Holy War.
 1096-9 (v) **First Crusade**. Jerusalem retaken and *Godfrey de Bouillon* made king.

B. Recapture of Jerusalem by Turks

- (i) Kingdom of Jerusalem passes to *Princes of Anjou* (kinsmen of Henry II).
 1147 (ii) Encroachment of Turks barely checked by **Second Crusade**.
 1187 (iii) Turks under *Saladin* defeat Angevin king near *Tiberias* and retake Jerusalem.

C. Failure of Christians to Win Jerusalem Back

- 1189 (i) **Third Crusade** organized by *Richard* of England, *Philip Augustus* of France, *Frederic Barbarossa*, Emperor of Germany.
 (ii) Emperor drowned on march: Richard and Philip Augustus quarrel *en route*.
 (iii) Campaign.
 (a) *Acre*, already besieged by Christians, taken on Richard's arrival.
 (b) Philip Augustus goes home to plot against Richard.

- 1191 (c) Richard, marching down coast to *Jaffa*, dogged by Saladin, whom he defeats at *Arsouf*.
 (d) From *Jaffa*, Richard marches via *Askalon* on Jerusalem, but is forced to turn back and winter at *Jaffa*.
 1192 (e) In spring, comes again within sight of Jerusalem, but unable to advance.
 (iv) Treats with Saladin for truce: on voyage home is driven on to Adriatic coast: caught by Leopold, Duke of Austria; and held to ransom by Emperor of Germany.

D. Subsequent Crusades

- 1249 (i) Many attempts at recapture of Jerusalem fail: the most famous and (1249 and 1270) made by *Louis IX of France* (St. Louis).
 1270 (ii) Jerusalem remains in Turkish hands till 1917.

XI. LOSS OF FRANCE AND MAGNA CHARTA

A. Richard's Rule in England (1189-1199)

- 1189 (i) On departure leaves England in charge of the Chancellor, *William Longchamp*, Bishop of *Ely*.
 (ii) Prince *John* drives out Longchamp and plots with Philip Augustus to filch Richard's territory.
 1194 (iii) Richard on return crushes John's rebellion.
 1199 (iv) After four years of frontier warfare against Philip Augustus is killed at *Chalu*.

B. John's Loss of French Provinces

- 1199 (i) *Anjou*, *Touraine*, and *Maine* fall away: all disgusted at John's murder of his rival, young *Arthur*.
 1204 (ii) *Château Gaillard*, key-fortress of Seine, captured by French and so *Normandy* lost.
 1214 (iii) Alliance between John and German Emperor ruined by Emperor's defeat at *Bouvines*.
N.B.—*Aquitaine* alone remains to England.

C. Quarrel with the Pope

- 1205 (i) Quarrel about appointment of Archbishop: Pope nominates *Langton*.
 1208 (ii) John refusing *Langton*, Pope lays *Interdict* on England.
 1213 (iii) Pope prompts Philip Augustus to reduce John to submission.
 (iv) John submits, paying tribute to Pope and accepting *Langton*.

D. Barons' Revolt

- (i) Barons, exasperated by taxation to finance French wars, find a leader in *Langton*.
 1214 (ii) Meeting at *Bury St. Edmunds*: barons propose to bind John to Charter of Henry I.
 1215 (iii) Barons raise army and force John to sign *Magna Charta* at *Runnymede*.
 1215 (iv) Committee of twenty-five barons to supervise John, and, when he resists, crown offered to Prince Louis of France, who lands in south.
 1216 John dies at *Newark*.

XII. HENRY III (1216-1272)

A. Henry's Boyhood

- (i) Henry III, aged nine; William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, acts as Regent.

- (ii) Prince Louis of France expelled from London by:
 - (a) Defeat of French knights by Earl Marshall at *Lincoln*.
 - (b) *Hubert de Burgh's* defeat of reinforcing fleet off Thames.
- 1227 (iii) Henry assumes government and after five years disgraces de Burgh, Earl Marshall's successor.

B. Thirty Years of Misrule (1227-1257)

- (i) Foreign favourites of Henry:
 - (a) Henry marries *Eleanor of Provence* and gives English posts to her uncles.
 - (b) To please Pope introduces foreign priests.
- (ii) Rise of national feeling:
 - (a) Anti-alien riots at Oxford and elsewhere.
 - (b) *Grosseteste*, Bishop of Lincoln, denounces Henry's subservience to Pope.
 - (c) His friend, *Simon de Montfort*, becomes champion of "England for the English."
- (iii) Revolt against the foreigners:
 - 1257 (a) Henry promises money to help Pope in winning *Sicily* from German Emperor.
 - (b) Barons, exasperated, demand dismissal of foreign favourites.
 - 1258 (c) By *Provisions of Oxford* fifteen barons, including Simon, to supervise Henry's government.

C. De Montfort's National Policy

[N.B.—Backed by townsmen, but only by part of baronage.]

- (i) Simon, wishful to remedy wrongs of lower classes, quarrels with selfish colleagues and leaves England.
- 1261 (ii) Henry goes back on promises: raises army against barons: Simon returns.
- 1263 (iii) Arbitration of French King (*Mise of Amiens*) rejected by Simon.
- 1264 (iv) Simon defeats and captures Henry and Prince Edward at *Lewes*.
- 1265 (v) Simon virtual King for one year: attempts (a) to form a constitutional government limiting King's authority, (b) to form a parliament representing all classes.

D. De Montfort's Fall

- (i) Prince Edward escapes from captivity and joins *Gloucester*, who has deserted Simon.
- (ii) Simon caught west of Severn and finds passage at *Worcester* barred.
- (iii) While prince makes diversion against Simon's son at *Kenilworth*, Simon crosses Severn to *Evesham*.
- 1265 (iv) Three armies, converging on him, defeat and kill him at *Evesham*.
- 1272 Henry dies.

XIII. EDWARD I (1272-1307) AND EDWARD II (1307-1327)

A. Edward I and Parliament

- (i) Edward adopts De Montfort's principle of consulting people through Parliament *when he needs taxes*.
- 1295 (ii) After various experiments summons **Model Parliament**, consisting of (a) *Lords*, viz., leading Barons and Bishops; (b) *Church*, viz., representatives of lesser clergy; (c) *Commons*, viz., men chosen by *sheriffs*, two per borough and two per shire.
- (iii) These three estates deliberate and vote taxes *separately*.
[N.B.—The clergy presently desert Parliament and hold *Convocation* independently.]

- (iv) Parliaments bargain for *redress of grievances* (e.g., of Forest Laws, 1301) as a condition of voting taxes.
- (v) After Edward's time Parliament, instead of leaving redress of grievances to King's legislation, frames *Bill* which it presents for King's approval.

B. Edward I and Wales

Conquest.

- (i) Welsh (=descendants of Ancient Britons), though subdued in south by Marcher earls, maintain independence in northwest.
- 1277 (ii) Chieftain *Llewellyn*, leagued with de Montfort faction, blockaded and surrenders.
- (iii) Edward tries to hold Wales by (a) Castles at *Conway*, *Carnarvon*, etc., (b) establishing English Laws and customs.

Revolt.

- 1282-3 (i) Tactless government rouses revolt: *Llewellyn* and his brother *David* captured and executed.
- (ii) Wales held down despite fresh revolt in 1284.
- (iii) As sop to Welsh pride Edward presents infant son as *Prince of Wales*.

C. Edward I and Scotland

Diplomacy.

- 1290 (i) Edward tries to unite crowns of Scotland and England by marrying his young son to girl queen of Scotland (*Maid of Norway*).
- 1290 (ii) On girl queen's death, nine candidates for throne: Edward nominates *John Balliol*.
- 1296 (iii) Edward treats his nominee as vassal king; forces Scots into resistance: deposes *Balliol* and annexes throne.

National Resistance

A. William Wallace

- 1297 (i) Cuts up English army at *Stirling Bridge*.
- 1298 (ii) Is defeated at *Falkirk* and executed. Edward appoints regents.

B. Robert Bruce, grandson of one of nine candidates.

- 1306 (i) Murders Edward's regent, *Red Comyn*; crowned, but is driven into hills.
- 1307 (ii) Edward I dies and Bruce begins to recover ground.

D. Edward II and Scotland

- (i) Bruce with French aid retakes *Edinburgh*, *Roxburgh*, etc.
- 1314 (ii) Defeats English at *Bannockburn*.
- (iii) Ravages English border and keeps crown till death, 1324.

E. Misgovernment of Edward II

Edward so weak that he is overridden by Barons, who

- (i) Appoint Lords Ordainers to control government.
- (ii) Thrice exile and finally execute his favourite, *Piers Gaveston*.
- 1327 (iii) Arrest and murder Edward himself.

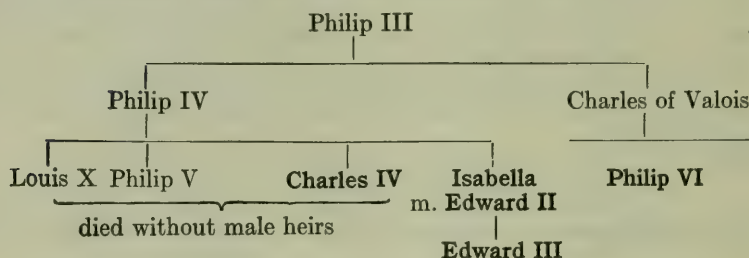
XIV. EDWARD III (1327-1377)

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR with France (1339-1458) begun by Edward III, continued by Henry V and Henry VI.

A. Causes which brought natural rivalry between two growing countries to a head.

- (i) Desire of *Philip VI* to recover English *Aquitaine*.

- (ii) Philip's encroachment on *Flanders* threatens to check English wool trade with *Ghent*, *Bruges*, etc.
- (iii) Philip helps *Bruce's son* to recover Scotland from Balliol's son whom Edward III set on throne after victory of *Halidon Hill*, 1333).
- (iv) Edward III *claims French throne* as being nephew (through his mother) to late King Charles IV, to whom Philip was only cousin.
[N.B.—French object that by *Salic Law* inheritance through a woman is barred.]



B. English Victories (1338–1360)

- 1338– (i) Preliminaries: English fleet beats French off *Sluys*. Fighting in
1345 Flanders and Aquitaine.
- 1346 (ii) Campaign of **Creçy** [object—to strike at Paris and draw off French from Aquitaine.]
- July 22 (a) Edward lands at *La Hogue* in Normandy.
(b) Loiters in Normandy: fails to take *Rouen*: sends fleet home.
(c) Finding large French army guarding *Paris*, turns north to Channel coast.
(d) Headed off at *River Somme*: escapes across tidal ford: turns on pursuers at *Creçy*.
- Aug. 26 (e) Battle of *Creçy* won by long-bow against disunited charges of French cavalry.
(f) Edward marches on to *Calais* and takes it after eleven months' siege.
- (iii) Nine years' lull. *Black Death* ravages England: Philip of France succeeded by John.
- 1356 (iv) Campaign of **Poitiers**, by Black Prince quartered at *Bordeaux*.
(a) Returning from *raid through Poitou*, Black Prince is overtaken near *Poitiers*.
(b) French knights (dismounted) attack English when they try to retire.
(c) French routed and *King John* made prisoner.
- 1360 (v) Treaty of **Bretigny**.
(a) Edward abandons claim to French throne.
(b) But receives **Ponthieu** and **Poitou**.

C. English Decline (1360–1377)

- (i) Unauthorised war between *free companies*.
 - (ii) Black Prince and *John of Gaunt* invade Spain and put Don Pedro on throne of Castile.
 - (iii) War renewed: French under *du Guesclin* avoid battle behind town walls.
 - (iv) English strength ebbing. Black Prince dies.
- 1376 **Result:** All English territory in France lost except **Calais** and strip round **Bordeaux**.

XV. PEASANTS' REVOLT (1381)

Causes.

- (i) During fourteenth century villeins were beginning to pay *rent* instead of *work* to landlords, and a large class of *free* labourers thus arose.
- 1349 (ii) *Black Death* causes scarcity of labourers: hence wages rise and villeins get out of hand.
- 1351 (iii) Parliament in interest of landlords try to fix wages at level previous to Black Death (*Statute of Labourers*).
- (iv) Agitation of socialistic priest, *John Ball*, and others. [1377, Ed. III dies.]
- 1381 (v) *Poll Tax* (to pay for French wars) levied on all: second visitation of collectors causes rising.

The Rising.

- (i) The men of *Kent* and *Essex* rise and murder landlords, etc.
- (ii) Enter London, sack *Savoy Palace*, etc., June 13.
- (iii) Richard (aged fourteen) leaves Tower to parley; massacre of *Chancellor*, etc., June 14.
- (iv) Richard meets rebels in *Smithfield Market*: Wat Tyler murdered, but Richard's coolness pacifies mob, June 15.
- (v) Peasants go home trusting in Richard's promises of lower rents, etc.
- (vi) Richard takes vengeance on rebels by brutal executions, etc.

Result.

Despite failure of rising, Statute of Labourers altered in 1390: and landlords gradually allow villeins their liberty: growth of yeoman class.

Wycliffe and the Lollards

State of Church.

- (i) Church controls education and hampers free thinking.
- (ii) Priests, monks, and even friars degenerating fast.
- 1378- (iii) "*Great Schism*" between Pope at Rome and rival Pope at *Avignon*
- 1418 (iv) Discredits Church.
- (iv) Despite Edward III's Statutes (*Praemunire*, forbidding English clergy to appeal to Rome, and *Provisors*, preventing Papal appointments to English benefices), English Church is too much under Pope's thumb.

Wycliffe's Protest.

- (i) Wycliffe, Master of *Balliol College, Oxford*, denounces Pope's supremacy.
- 1377 (ii) Wycliffe tried in St. Paul's: rescued through riot of citizens against *John of Gaunt*.
- (iii) Council, which attempts to denounce Wycliffe as heretic, discredited by earthquake.
- (iv) Wycliffe founds order of poor priests, "*Lollards*": and translates Bible into English.
- 1384 (v) After Wycliffe's death Lollards continue.
- 1401 (vi) Many (e.g., *John Oldcastle*) burnt under Statute "*de heretico comburendo*".

Result.

Though partially suppressed, Lollardry paves way for Reformation.

XVI. HOUSE OF LANCASTER

Fall of Richard II

- (i) *John of Gaunt*, King Richard's uncle, by marriage with heiress, becomes *Duke of Lancaster*.
- 1388 (ii) His son, *Henry Bolingbroke*, assists *Lords Appellant* to humiliate youthful Richard.

- 1389 (iii) Richard recovers power and simulates forgiveness.
 1397 (iv) Richard takes vengeance on Lords Appellant: but promotes *Bolingbroke* to be Duke of Hereford, and *Mowbray* to be Duke of Norfolk.
 1398 (v) Exiles Bolingbroke and Mowbray.
 1399 (vi) John of Gaunt dies. Bolingbroke returns to claim Duchy of Lancaster.
 (vii) Captures Richard, has him murdered at Pontefract, and takes crown as Henry IV.

Reign of Henry IV

- (i) *Owen Glendower* in Wales and *Earl Douglas* in Scotland rise in Richard's cause.
 (ii) The *Percies*, who defeat Earl Douglas at *Homildon Hill*, alienated by Henry's claim of prisoners.
 1403 (iii) Percies and the Scotch in alliance defeated by Henry at *Shrewsbury*.
 1413 (iv) Henry IV dies.

Henry V Renews Hundred Years' War

- (i) France (under mad King Charles VI) divided between faction of Jean Sans Peur, Duke of *Burgundy*, and aristocrat party of Duke of *Orleans*, whom Jean murders.
 (ii) Henry undertakes war to divert English minds from domestic quarrels.
 1415 (iii) Campaign of *Agincourt*.
 (a) Loses one-third of force in capture of *Harfleur*.
 (b) Marches towards Calais dogged by *Constable*.
 (c) After detour at River *Somme* cut off at Agincourt.
 (d) English win through long-bow and capture Duke of Orleans.
 1419 (iv) Jean Sans Peur murdered by Dauphin and Orleanists: his son joins English.
 1420 (v) With Burgundian aid Henry extorts promise of crown on mad king's death. [*Treaty of Troyes*.]
 (vi) Northern France in English hands. Dauphin retreats south of Loire.
 1422 (vii) Henry V dies.

The Turn of the Tide

A. Jeanne d'Arc

- 1428 (i) *Duke of Bedford* (Regent for infant Henry VI) besieges *Orleans* (key to Loire valley).
 1429 (ii) Jeanne persuades Dauphin to send her to relief of Orleans.
 1429 (iii) Jeanne raises siege; pursues and defeats English at *Patay*.
 1429 (iv) With her encouragement Dauphin crowned at *Rheims*.
 1431 (v) Jeanne captured by Burgundians and burnt at *Rouen*.

B. Desertion of Burgundy.

- 1431 (i) Henry VI crowned at Paris: but English lose ground.
 1435 (ii) Duke of Burgundy offended by Bedford's marriage with princess of *St. Pol*, which he himself covets.
 1437 (iii) Burgundy deserts English: Dauphin recovers north France.
 1449 (iv) Despite Richard Duke of York's defence, Normandy slowly lost.
 1453 (v) All French soil lost except *Calais*.
 (vi) The Dauphin, now Charles VII, and his son, *Louis XI*, restore prosperity to France.

XVII. HOUSE OF YORK

Rise of Yorkists

- (i) Henry VI half mad and discredited by failure in France.
 1453 (ii) *Richard, Duke of York*, also a descendant of Edward III (see Genealogy), becomes Regent and hopes for crown.
 (iii) On birth of a son to Henry, York plans usurpation.
 (iv) Receives powerful backing from *Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick*.

Lancastrians Thrice Victorious and Thrice Misuse Their Victory

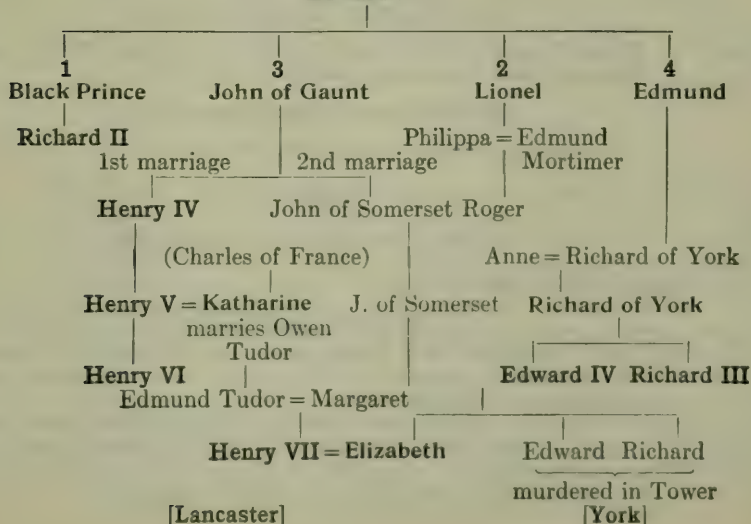
- 1459 A. (i) York and Warwick rebel and are driven out of England.
 (ii) Henry's queen, Margaret, alienates south by cruel revenges.
- 1460 (iii) Warwick returning defeats Lancastrians at *Northampton* and restores York to regency.
- 1460 B. (i) Queen Margaret, gathering new army in north, defeats and kills York at *Wakefield*.
 (ii) Defeats Warwick at *St. Albans*: but is forestalled in occupation of London by *York's son, Edward*.
- 1461 (iii) Gathering support (thanks to retreating Lancastrian's excesses). Edward follows and defeats them at *Towton*.
 (iv) Edward crowned King: Henry and Margaret escape to Scotland.
- 1465 C. (i) Edward alienates "King-maker" Warwick by idleness and marriage into another family.
- 1469 (ii) Being joined by Warwick, Lancastrians drive Edward out.
 (iii) Edward gathers support in France and returns.
- 1471 (iv) Defeats Lancastrians at *Barnet* (where Warwick falls) and *Tewksbury*.
 (v) Gets his brother *Richard of Gloucester* to murder old King Henry.

The Two Yorkist Kings**A. Edward IV**

- (i) Self-indulgent and unscrupulous: murders brother, *Duke of Clarence*.
 (ii) At death leaves two young boys as heirs, under charge of queen.

[1471–1483] B. Richard III

- (i) Accuses Edward's queen of witchcraft: and puts two nephews into Tower.
 (ii) On plea of Edward's illegal marriage, gets Parliament to make him King.
 (iii) Murders his two nephews in the Tower.
 (iv) Richard's unpopular and harsh government alienates supporters.
 (v) *Henry Tudor* (a Lancastrian, see Genealogy) lands in Wales and defeats and kills Richard at *Bosworth Field*.

Henry Tudor by Marriage with Elizabeth, Edward's Daughter, Unites Lancaster and York.**Edward III**

XVIII. ARTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

LITERATURE.

Jean Froissart, born in France, 1337; died 1410. Serves under a French noble; travels in England, Scotland, Italy, etc.; writes a **Chronicle** in French describing the events of The Hundred Years' War, etc., from 1326-1400.

Geoffrey Chaucer, born about 1335; died 1400. Serves in France under Edward III; Member of Parliament for Kent; Valet of Royal Chamber and receives a pension from the King; writes in rhymed couplets the **Canterbury Tales**, consisting of a Prologue (which describes the pilgrims who met at Southwark en route for Canterbury) and the stories which the pilgrims told on their journey.

Sir Thomas Malory, born about 1400; died 1471. Probably served under Earl of Warwick, who had charge of Joan of Arc at Rouen; taking as his subject the story of King Arthur and his knights (already told by Geoffrey of Monmouth and others), he wrote in prose the **Morte d'Arthur**, which Tennyson retold in verse in his "Idylls of the King".

ARCHITECTURE.

N.B.—Dates are approximate; the different styles overlap each other.

A. 1050-1200, Norman Style

- (i) *Round* arches and thick pillars.
- (ii) Patterns of zigzag type.
- (iii) Roofs usually of timber, rarely of stone.
- (iv) Square squat towers like fortress.

B. 1200-1350, Early English developing into Decorated Style

- (i) *Pointed* arches and slender pillars.
- (ii) Delicate carving in imitation of foliage, etc.
- (iii) Stone vaulted roofs.
- (iv) Windows at first narrow "lancets," but developing gradually into decorated tracery of geometrical or flowing pattern.

C. 1350-1500, Perpendicular Style

Lines of tracery carried up vertically to head of window; general tendency to monotonous repetition.

D. 1500 onwards, Renaissance Style

In imitation of ancient Greek and Roman models.

PART II

I. THE TUDORS AND EUROPE

HENRY VII. (1485-1509)

A. Recovery of Royal Power

- (i) After *Bosworth Field*, Henry, with his Yorkist wife, unites the country and suppresses feeble risings of the pretenders, *Lambert Simnel* and *Perkin Warbeck*.
- (ii) The nobility, already weakened by the Wars of the Roses, are further restricted by the limitation of their retainers, Court of the *Star Chamber*, etc.
- (iii) Royal treasury replenished by strictest economy.

B. Foreign Policy

- (i) Vigorous trade with Mediterranean and with Baltic ports of *Hanseatic league*.
- (ii) Commercial Treaty ("Great Intercourse") with Holland.
- (iii) Marriage, first of *Prince Arthur*, then of *Prince Henry* to *Catharine of Aragon*, the Infanta of Spain.

HENRY VIII. (1509-47)

A. England a Power in Europe

- (i) *Ferdinand* of Spain, wishing to wrest *Milan* from France, persuades his son-in-law, *Henry VIII*, to assist.
- 1513 (ii) But English expeditions, first to *Aquitaine* and then to *Flanders* (*Battle of Spurs*), receive no backing from *Ferdinand*.
- (iii) *Henry* therefore deserts *Ferdinand* and joins France, marrying his own sister *Margaret* to the aged French king.

B. Wolsey and the Balance of Power

- 1516 (i) Youthful *Francis* succeeds to French throne, and *Charles V* succeeds *Ferdinand* in Spain.
- 1519 (ii) On death of the *Emperor Maximilian*, *Charles V* is elected Emperor also.
- (iii) *Charles* and *Francis* both bid for England's friendship: and for a while *Wolsey* enhances England's importance by playing with them both.
- 1520 (iv) After pretending friendship for *Francis* at *Field of Cloth of Gold*, *Henry* unwisely joins side of *Charles V*.
- 1525 (v) *Charles* thus becomes supreme in Europe, and during struggle for *Milan* defeats and captures *Francis* at *Pavia*.

C. The Divorce leads to breach with Charles and Pope

- (i) Dissatisfied with his childless wife, *Catharine of Aragon*, *Henry* determines to divorce her at risk of breach with her nephew, *Charles V*.
- (ii) The Pope falls into hands of *Charles's* troops, and under *Charles's* influence refuses the divorce.
- 1529 (iii) *Wolsey* dismissed for failure in divorce negotiations, and dies.
- (iv) *Henry* having divorced *Catharine* and broken with Roman Church, *Francis* and *Charles* threaten joint invasion, but the jealousy previously fostered by *Wolsey's* policy prevents either from acting.

II. THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

A. Causes of the Renaissance

- (i) Tyranny of Church teaching prevents all honest effort after truth.
- (ii) Philosophy of the Schoolmen (based mainly on works of the Greek *Aristotle*, fourth century B.C.) dictates beliefs about geography, astronomy, etc., until challenged by scientific discoveries of *Copernicus* of *Thorn* (Prussian Poland) (c. 1500) and *Galileo* of *Pisa* (c. 1600).
- (iii) Study of Greek authors leads to a reawakening in Italy, especially when sack of *Constantinople* by Turks in 1453 drove Greek scholars west.
- (iv) Enthusiasm for the classics causes revival of Græco-Roman style in architecture, etc.
- (v) Great age of art in Italy produces the many-sided genius of *Michelangelo* (1475-1564) (poet, painter, architect, and sculptor) and *Leonardo da Vinci* (painter and scientist) (1452-1519).

B. Renaissance in North Europe

- (i) Small group of scholars take up new learning in England.
 - (a) *Colet*, Dean of St. Paul's, founds St. Paul's School to encourage Greek learning.
 - (b) *Sir Thomas More* writes socialistic treatise called *Utopia*.
 - (c) *Erasmus*, a Dutchman, compiles new and accurate edition of Greek Testament.
- (ii) Printing (invented by Gutenberg of Strasburg and introduced into England by *Caxton*) spreads the new message among public.

C. Reformation on the Continent

- 1517 (i) Wishing to collect funds for new St. Peter's, the Pope issues Indulgences for sale.
- (ii) *Luther*, priest at *Wittenberg* in Germany, protests, and despite friendly support of the *Electors of Saxony* is denounced as heretic.
- (iii) Luther summoned before German Parliament at *Worms*; but is saved by threat of peasants' rising.
- (iv) *Charles V*, as Emperor, tries to suppress new teaching by war on peasants, but finally gives up struggle and abdicates in 1555.
- (v) Reformation spreads from Luther over N. Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and from *Calvin* of *Geneva* over Switzerland, Netherlands, Scotland, and West France.

D. Reformation in England

- 1535 (i) Having made himself Supreme Head of English Church, Henry executes alike traitors who refuse to acknowledge his authority and heretics who disagree with doctrines of the Church.
- (ii) *Sir T. More* and *Bishop Fisher* executed for disapproving the divorce.
- (iii) Following precedent of *Wolsey*, who suppressed a few small monasteries in 1524, Henry sets up a Commission under *Thomas Cromwell* and suppresses in 1536 monasteries with under £200 a year, then, between 1536-40, all larger houses.
- 1536-7 (iv) Conservative peasants of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire rise under *Robert Aske* out of sympathy for monks and fear of further depredations (*Pilgrimage of Grace*); but are suppressed and after second rising cruelly punished.
- (v) Wealth of monasteries partly confiscated to Royal exchequer, partly made over to King's favourites (*e.g.*, *Cecil*s), partly spent on endowing education (*e.g.*, foundation of *Trinity College, Cambridge*, and in *Edward VI*'s reign of schools at *Shrewsbury, Sherborne*, etc.).

E. Reform of Doctrine

- (i) Masses for dead forbidden; images of saints in many places destroyed.
- 1539 (ii) At first in his *Six Articles* Henry, like Rome, insists on Transubstantiation, confession, and celibacy of priests.
- (iii) But, owing to Archbishop *Cranmer*'s more enlightened policy and the spread of knowledge through translation of Bible (by *Tyndale, Coverdale*, etc.), progress is made towards greater liberty.

F. Henry's Domestic Troubles

His wives: 1. *Catharine* of *Aragon*, divorced. Daughter, *MARY*.
 2. *Anne Boleyn*, beheaded. Daughter, *ELIZABETH*.
 3. *Jane Seymour*, of *Wiltshire* family, dies. Son, *EDWARD*.

4. *Anne of Cleves*, from Germany, suggested by Cromwell, divorced.
5. *Catherine Howard*, beheaded.
6. *Catherine Parr*, outlives him.

Henry dies, 1547.

III. THE RELIGIOUS QUARREL

EDWARD VI (1547-53)

A. Somerset's Regency (1547-49)

- (i) Somerset favours toleration and progress, allowing *Cranmer* to issue new *English Prayer-Book*, but fails to govern strongly.
- (ii) Though towns prosper owing to increase of trade and weaving industry, country folk are worse off under avaricious landlords who have received monastic lands. Much land "enclosed" for sheep-farming; tenants evicted; and unemployed vagabonds become a dangerous nuisance.
- (iii) Somerset, though sympathetic to peasants, fails to curb landlords, and a rising in Norfolk under *Robert Kett* leads to his downfall and subsequent execution.

B. Northumberland's Regency (1549-53)

- (i) Abandoning Somerset's broad-minded laxity, Northumberland adopts extreme Protestant policy in order to get loot.
- (ii) "*Great spoliation*" of church plate and other treasure.
- (iii) Not satisfied with *Cranmer's Prayer-Book*, Northumberland introduces New *Prayer-Book* of Bishop *Ridley*, abolishing all that smacks of Popery.

LADY JANE GREY (July 10-20, 1553)

- (i) As Edward sickened for his death, Northumberland plans to bestow crown on Lady Jane Grey, daughter of Henry VIII's sister, and now the betrothed of his own son, *Guildford Dudley*.
- (ii) Will of Edward VI altered to suit this plan.
- (iii) On Edward's death Jane proclaimed queen, but by Mary's promptitude the usurpation collapses within a week.
- (iv) Northumberland beheaded, and, owing to Protestant revolt of *Wyatt*, Jane and *Guildford Dudley* beheaded next year.

MARY (1553-58)

- 1554 To strengthen her hand for attack on Protestants, Mary marries Philip, son of Charles V of Spain.

A. Religious Results

- (i) Pope withdraws interdict against England and sends over Cardinal *Pole*.
- 1555 (ii) Persecution begun: *Latimer* and *Ridley* burned at Oxford; *Cranmer* soon after.

B. Political Results

- (i) Philip determines, come what may, to be master of England.
- 1556 (ii) Philip, becoming king of Spain by Charles V's abdication, leaves England.
- (iii) He persuades Mary to join him in attack on France: England ill-prepared; and its garrison surrendering, *Calais* is lost.

ELIZABETH'S SETTLEMENT

- (i) Elizabeth issues 39 Articles defining faith of English Church and striking a mean between Roman and extreme Protestant doctrine (*e.g.*, on question of the Sacrament).
- (ii) But insists by Act of Uniformity that every one must attend church on pain of fine.

IV. ELIZABETH, PHILIP, AND MARY STUART**A. The Counter-Reformation in Europe**

- 1545-63 (i) Hoping to check the spread of Protestantism, the Great Council held at *Trent* overhauls the organisation of the Roman Church, stiffens its discipline, and accurately defines its creed.
- c. 1540 (ii) *Ignatius Loyola*, a Spanish noble turned monk, founds the Order of the Jesuits, who exercise a powerful influence throughout Europe.
- (iii) In Spain, now Rome's chief champion, the *Inquisition* suppresses heresy by the cruellest methods.

B. Continental Protestants appeal to England

- 1560 (i) In the Spanish Netherlands, though southern districts (= modern Belgium) remain Catholic, the Protestants of the northern states (= modern Holland) refuse to be cowed by cruel persecutions of *Duke of Alva*.
- 1567-73 (ii) In France the Protestant Huguenots increase, and *Catherine de Medici*, the queen-mother, is urged by the great *Guise* family into war against them.
- 1562 (iii) At appeal from Netherlands and Huguenots, Elizabeth, on *Cecil's* advice, sends expedition to Le Havre; but after its failure she determines on neutrality, which she maintains for a quarter of a century.
- 1562

C. Elizabeth's Neutrality (1563-85)

- (i) Like Wolsey, Elizabeth contrives to keep both France and Spain on tenterhooks by siding decisively with neither.
- (ii) To aid her plan she plays artfully with various foreign suitors: first with her brother-in-law, *Philip* of Spain; then with his younger brother; finally with the French *Duke of Anjou*.
- (iii) Meanwhile she makes a definite alliance with France, and sticks to it despite the massacre of the Huguenots in Paris on *St. Bartholomew's Eve*.
- (iv) Thanks to such ingenious use of the "Balance of Power," the Pope's suggestion for a Catholic crusade against England (which he had again excommunicated in 1570) takes no effect.
- 1572

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (1542-87)**A. Her Origin**

- (i) Hoping to unite the two kingdoms, Henry VII had married his daughter to James IV of Scotland.
- 1513 (ii) Despite this, James IV had attacked Henry VIII during his campaign in France, but was defeated at *Flodden Field*.
- 1542 (iii) After fighting Henry at *Solway Moss*, his son James V dies, leaving behind an infant daughter, Mary Stuart.

B. Her Career

- 1547 (i) Partly in revenge for Somerset's attack on Scots (*Pinkie Cleugh*),
- 1558 Mary marries the *Dauphin* of France and asserts her right to the English throne.

- 1561 (ii) On her French husband's death she returns to Scotland, where as a Catholic she is unpopular with Presbyterian majority led by preacher *John Knox*.
- 1566 (iii) She marries her cousin *Henry Darnley*, but, owing to his murder of her secretary *Rizzio*, plots with her lover *Bothwell* to murder Darnley.
- 1567 (iv) Having eloped with *Bothwell*, she is captured by *Earl of Moray* and imprisoned in *Loch Leven Castle*.
- 1568 (v) On the defeat of her friends' rising at *Langside*, she flees to England and throws herself on Elizabeth's mercy.

C. Elizabeth and Mary

- (i) While jealous of Mary as being, though a Catholic, her only possible heir, Elizabeth shrinks from alienating Mary's numerous English friends.
- 1571 (ii) Despite rising of some Roman Catholic earls in the north, and the assassination plots of *Ridolfi* and others, Elizabeth will not try Mary for her complicity in these or in Darnley's murder, but merely keeps her in prison.
- (iii) Thus at home, as abroad, Elizabeth sits on the fence and refuses to show her hand, thereby gaining time to build up England's strength against the day of reckoning.

V. THE ARMADA

A. End of Elizabeth's Neutrality: Causes

- 1579 (i) Philip despairs of conquering Netherlands (where league of northern Protestant states is formed under *William the Silent*) and decides to conquer England *first*.
- 1584 (ii) All chance of France helping England against Spain removed by fresh civil war against Huguenots, promoted by the Guises to prevent Protestant *Henry of Navarre* from succeeding to throne.
- 1584 (iii) Spanish Ambassador *Mendoza* implicated in *Throgmorton's* plot against Elizabeth's life and is dismissed from England.

B. The Challenge

- 1584 (i) Murder of William the Silent by a Spanish agent stirs Elizabeth's own fears, and she sends expedition under *Leicester* to Netherlands. After *Zutphen* and other inconclusive fighting Leicester returns.
- 1585 (ii) Fearing plots against Queen's life, Parliament prescribes death penalty to anyone "*in whose interest*" such plots are made.
- (iii) *Babington's* treasonable correspondence with Mary Stuart intercepted by Elizabeth's secretary *Walsingham*. Mary tried under the new law; and, though Elizabeth refuses to sign death-warrant, executed at *Fotheringay*.
- 1587 *Result:* Philip, incensed by Leicester's expedition and seeing no hope of recovering England for Roman Church now Mary Stuart is dead, decides on invasion.

C. English Navy, etc.

- (i) Royal Fleet, first organised by Henry VIII, and now consisting of thirty men-of-war, is more efficient than Spanish galleons, which are merely converted merchantmen.
- (ii) Numerous Privateers: long encouraged by Elizabeth in undertaking voyages
- (a) to discover new routes to India, *e.g.*, *Willoughby* round N. Russia, 1553, and *Frobisher* round N. America, 1576;

- (b) to plunder Spain's treasure ships from America: *e.g.*, *Hawkins* brothers at *Santa Cruz* and off the *Spanish Main*, and *Drake*, who sailed round world plundering Spanish ships and ports en route.
- 1577-80 (iii) Elizabeth, for economy, starves fleet of food and powder.
- (iv) Fearing invasion, army of 40,000 hastily raised and stationed under *Leicester* at *Tilbury*.

D. Philip's Preparations

- 1587 (i) While preparing in *Cadiz* harbour the Armada is caught napping by *Drake*; and damage causes a year's delay.
- 1588 (ii) Armada (130 ships) sets out under *Medina Sidonia*, but is further delayed by bad organisation of supplies.
- May (iii) Armada arrives in Channel, intending to ignore English fleet, reach Flanders, and convoy thence to England *Parma's* Army of Invasion.
- July 31

E. The Fighting

- 1st Phase (Saturday, July 31-Saturday, August 7).
Lord Howard and *Drake* harry Armada up Channel and into *Calais Roads* without inflicting serious damage.
- 2nd Phase (Sunday, August 8, and Monday, August 9).
On arrival of Thames squadron under *Lord Seymour* and *John Hawkins*, English drive Spaniards out of *Calais* by fireships; and, next morning, catch and severely punish a third of fleet under *Medina Sidonia* near *Dunkirk*. Decisive victory prevented by shortage of powder.
- 3rd Phase (from Tuesday, August 10).
English follow up demoralised enemy as they drift towards Flemish shoals. Wind changes suddenly and carries them north. *Howard* pursues as far as *Forth*. Spanish wrecked by gale off Scotland and Ireland. Under half get home.

F. The Results.

- 1589 (i) Counter-attacks by *Drake*, who sacks *Vigo* and *Corunna*: and by *Howard*, who in '96 destroys arsenals at *Cadiz*. Trade routes constantly harried.
- 1596 (ii) Spain gradually sinks under the strain and loses sea supremacy.
- (iii) Severe check to Catholic schemes. England and Protestants triumphant: Netherlands left unmolested. Protestant *Henry of Navarre* succeeds to France and (though himself turning Catholic) grants toleration to Huguenots by *Edict of Nantes*.
- 1598
- BUT religious feud in Europe is soon to be revived in Germany in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).

VI. AGE OF ELIZABETH

A. Literature: Influence of Renaissance

- (i) Renaissance stimulates great interest in literature: many distinguished soldiers and statesmen write verse and prose, *e.g.*, *Sir Philip Sidney* and *Lord Bacon*.
- (ii) Poets and playwrights patronised by the Queen (whom they all flatter) and by noblemen such as *Earl of Southampton*.
- (iii) English writers much influenced by foreign literature. Old religious "mystery" plays give way to regular dramas and plots often copied from Italian or Spanish plays: *e.g.*, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.
- (iv) Phraseology of Greek and Latin widely imitated: *e.g.*, *Phœbus*, *Jove*, *Nymph*, etc.

B. Chief Writers

Edmund Spenser (1552-1599). Born in London. Given estate in County Cork, where he becomes sheriff. Writes epic called "*Faerie Queene*," six books in rhymed nine-line stanzas, describing in semi-antique language the allegorical adventures of Una (Truth), the Red Cross Knight (Holiness), and others.

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593). A riotous liver who died young the victim of a tavern brawl. Wrote fine but somewhat bombastic plays, "*Tamburlaine the Great*" and "*The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*."

William Shakespeare (1564-1616). Born at Stratford-on-Avon; prosecuted for deer-stealing; marries Anne Hathaway; goes to London at age of 23; works as ostler at theatre door; becomes actor in minor parts; employed to rewrite old plays, and finally on original work; becomes partner in *Globe Theatre*; and having made money retires to Stratford-on-Avon two years before his death.

Plays of Youth (1590-93): e.g., *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

First-fruits of Genius (1594-1601):

(i) Comedies: e.g., *Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night*.

(ii) Historical Plays: e.g., *Henry IV*, *Richard II*, etc.

(iii) Roman Plays: e.g., *Julius Cæsar*.

The Great Tragedies (1601-10): *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Lear*, *Macbeth*.

Farewell Play (1612): *The Tempest*.

Ben Jonson (1573-1637). Friend of Shakespeare; writes comedies, "*Every Man in his Humour*" and "*Every Man out of his Humour*."

Francis Bacon, Viscount St. Albans (1561-1626). Great lawyer and student; under James I becomes Lord Chancellor; impeached in 1618 for taking bribes and dies in disgrace. Student of philosophy and writes scientific treatise called "*Novum Organum*," as well as numerous "*Essays*" on various subjects.

C. Ireland

I. Previous History.

- 1269 (i) Under Henry II *Strongbow's* expedition had effected only partial conquest, and various English earls, though carving out small kingdoms for themselves, had soon become as Irish as the Irish.
- (ii) Only a strip round Dublin (the "Pale") remained under true English rule.
- 1534 (iii) *Thomas of Kildare*, having raised revolt in Leinster (E.), Henry VIII compels Irish chiefs to acknowledge his sovereignty and accept Protestant reforms.
- (iv) Roman priests win round the superstitious natives to Popery and foment hostility to England.

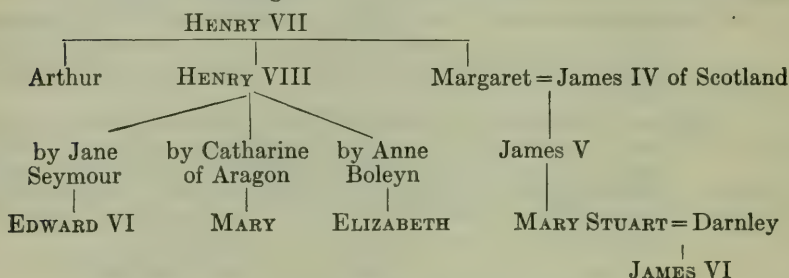
II. Under Elizabeth.

- 1579 (i) Encouraged by Philip of Spain, *O'Neills* of Ulster (N.) plot against Elizabeth.
- (ii) Elizabeth turns out Irish peasants from Munster (S.) and plants Protestant immigrants from England.
- 1598 (iii) National revolt under *O'Neills*: planters attacked.
- 1599 (iv) Elizabeth sends her favourite, *Earl of Essex*, to suppress revolt.
- (v) *Essex*, after costly and fruitless expedition into Munster, offers Irish chiefs Home Rule.
- (vi) On his return *Leicester* is arrested; on release plots against Elizabeth and is beheaded.
- 1600 (vii) *Lord Mountjoy*, by cruel massacres, suppresses Irish, arousing intense bitterness.

VII. JAMES I. (1603-1625)

A. Union of the Crowns

James VI of Scotland becomes James I of England, though the two kingdoms remain independent with separate Parliaments and laws until *Anne's* reign.



B. Religious Difficulties

- I. With Puritans, who expect a king from Presbyterian Scotland to sympathise with their ideas.
 - 1604 (i) James, on receiving "*Millenary Petition*," summons a conference at *Hampton Court*.
 - (ii) Hearing Presbyterian "synod" proposed, declares it incompatible with his idea of kingship and dismisses conference.
 - (iii) Many clergy turned out for Puritan opinions: a few emigrate to Holland and later to America (in "*Mayflower*").
- 1620 (iv) James orders issue of *Authorised Version* of Bible, based on Tyn-dale's version (1538).
- II. With Catholics, who, despairing of open rising, plot assassination.
 - 1603 (i) "*Bye Plot*" detected, and "*Main Plot*" suspected.
 - 1603 (ii) *Sir Walter Raleigh* thrown into Tower on slender evidence; released in 1616 for voyage up *Orinoco* to discover gold in fabulous *El Dorado*; on failure is executed for fighting Spaniards.
 - 1605 (iii) *Catesby*, *Tresham*, *Garnet* (a Jesuit), and other Catholics conspire to blow up King and Parliament, with aid of *Guy Fawkes*, a soldier of fortune.
 - (iv) *Tresham's* warning letter to *Lord Monteagle* gives plot away: conspirators flee to Midlands, but are surrounded and shot down.

C. Quarrel with Parliament

- (i) Cause = James's inevitable financial difficulties (not extravagance).
 - (a) Owing in part to abundance of imported silver, the purchasing value of money has dropped to a *third* of the value it had in 1500. Hence old revenues are wholly insufficient to meet expenses of Army, Navy, etc.
 - (b) Though revenues from royal estates, feudal dues, fines, etc., are secure to the Crown, the regular Import dues ("*Tunnage and Poundage*") and occasional "*subsidies*" are dependent on Parliament's vote.
- (ii) Though allowed *Tunnage* and *Poundage* for life, James, finding the proceeds inadequate, attempts to raise the scale of duties; and, though a merchant, *Bates*, appealed against this to Law Courts, judges decided for the King.
- (iii) Parliament attacks James's policy, and is dismissed. From 1611-21 (except for brief "*Addled Parliament*," 1614) James rules without a Parliament.

D. James's Foreign Policy

- (i) Renewal of Religious Wars on Continent:
 - 1618 (a) Lutheran nobles of *Bohemia* choose Protestant *Frederic* (*Elector of Palatinate*) as King in preference to Catholic Emperor.
 - 1618-48 (b) Emperor's attack on them begins the Thirty Years' War between German Catholics (chiefly south) and German Protestants (chiefly north).
 - (c) Emperor defeats Bohemians outside their capital, *Prague*, and King of Spain, eager to help Emperor, invades *Palatinate*.
- (ii) English anxious to help *Frederic*—
 - (a) as being a Protestant.
 - (b) as being husband of James I's daughter.
- (iii) James, however, inclines towards friendship with Spain.
 - (a) Under influence of *Gondomar*, Spanish Ambassador, and the *Duke of Buckingham*, his favourite, James contemplates marrying his son *Charles* to the *Infanta*.
 - 1621 (b) Though resummoning Parliament and feigning himself willing to help *Frederic* against Spain, James sends *Charles* and *Buckingham* to Madrid.
- (iv) After return from this futile journey, *Buckingham* gets James to change his tack, marrying *Charles* to French princess, *Henrietta Maria*; and sending unsuccessful expedition to Netherlands to support Protestants and *Frederic* against Spain.
James dies, 1625.

VIII. CHARLES I. (1625-1649)

A. Buckingham and Europe

- (i) War against Spain:
 - 1625 (a) Following new anti-Spanish policy, *Buckingham* plans expedition against *Cadiz*.
 - (b) Its disastrous failure quenches his anti-Spanish zeal.
- (ii) Alliance with France against Huguenots:
 - (a) French king appeals to *Charles* (as being his sister *Henrietta Maria*'s husband) for help against Huguenots at *La Rochelle*.
 - 1626 (b) English fleet lent, much against its will, to French king.
- (iii) Alliance with Huguenots against France:
 - (a) Outburst of Protestant indignation in England compels change of policy.
 - (b) Two expeditions sent to relief of *La Rochelle*.
 - 1627 1st expedition, to seize Island of *Rhé*, opposite *Rochelle*, ends in defeat and capture of English flags.
 - 1628 2nd expedition planned, but on eve of departure *Buckingham* is murdered at *Portsmouth*, and on its arrival *La Rochelle* surrenders to French.

Result: *Charles* ceases to meddle in continental politics, and France rises under *Richelieu*, *Mazarin*, and *Louis XIV* to predominant place in Europe.

B. Rise of France

- (i) As Spain declines, France becomes more powerful under ambitious Cardinal *Richelieu* (1624-42).
- (ii) France takes no part in Thirty Years' War so long as German Protestants, aided by *Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden*, maintain themselves against the Emperor.
- 1632 (iii) When, however, *Gustavus* is killed at *Lutzen* and Protestants are hard pressed, *Richelieu*, fearing supremacy of Emperor, assists them.

- 1648 (iv) After Richelieu's death Cardinal *Mazarin* continues enmity to Austria; and at final settlement (*Treaty of Westphalia*) obtains *Alsace* for France.
- (v) Louis XIV, coming of age to rule, aims at mastery of Europe.

C. Charles and Parliament

1st Phase (1625–28): Grievances leading to "Petition of Right."

- (i) The Commons' distrust of Charles shown by refusal to grant him *Tunnage and Poundage* for life.
- (ii) Charles, desperate for money, takes it *without leave*.
- (iii) Charles further imposes *Forced Loans* and punishes refusal by *imprisonment*.
- (iv) Soldiers from La Rochelle Expedition *billeted* on civilians, causing great commotion by riotous behaviour.
- (v) Introduction of *Martial Law* to curb soldiers inspires fear of military despotism.

Result: Parliament, being called to vote money for second expedition to relieve La Rochelle, extorts Charles's assent to Petition of Right.

- 1628 (a) No *Loan or Tax* without Parliament's leave.
- (b) No *imprisonment* without legal cause.
- (c) No *billeting* of soldiers on civilians.
- (d) *Martial Law* to be withdrawn.

2nd Phase:

- (i) Parliament, emboldened by this success, seeks to impeach Buckingham; Charles forbids it.
- 1628 (ii) Buckingham's murder hailed with universal joy; an insult Charles never forgives.
- 1629 (iii) Charles dismisses Parliament for good; but, before dissolving, members pass resolution against any who shall advise "illegal innovations."
- (iv) Charles imprisons their leader, *Sir John Eliot*, in Tower, where he dies of consumption.

Result: *Pym* and other Parliamentary leaders driven to contemplate rebellion.

IX. CHARLES AS AUTOCRAT (1629–1641)

A. Eleven Years without Parliament

- (i) Charles attempts to ignore long growth of constitutional methods; rakes up old-fashioned privileges of Crown and uses *Star Chamber* court freely.
- 1634 (ii) To raise funds he adopts obsolete mediæval tax of *Ship-money*, which he levies on inland counties as well as on coast.
- 1636 (iii) Amongst others, *John Hampden* of Buckinghamshire refuses to pay and is heavily fined.

B. Charles's Assistants

I. Thomas Wentworth, later made Earl of Strafford.

- (i) Deserts Parliamentarians, thinking strong government of Crown essential.
- 1632 (ii) Is sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy.
- (iii) Encourages Protestant settlers recently planted in Ulster by James I by introducing linen trade.
- (iv) Keeps Irish Catholics down by rigorous, but just, rule.
- (v) Forms a serviceable army, ostensibly for use against the Catholics.

II. William Laud, made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633.

- (i) Screws up lax discipline of English Church; *e.g.*, stops use of St. Paul's as market.

- (ii) Insists on High Church ritual and punishes Protestant dissenters.
- (iii) Issues *Book of Sports* for compulsory Sunday games and punishes *Prynne* for attack on theatre.
- (iv) Many Puritans emigrate to America, and public begin to suspect that Laud and Charles (led by his Catholic Queen) are tending back towards Rome.

C. Charles's Quarrel with the Scots

- (i) Three-quarters of Scotland now belongs to Presbyterian Kirk, based on democratic election of ministers by congregation, and ruled by elected synods in place of bishops (though James I had reinstated bishops recently).
- 1637 (ii) Laud and Charles impose English Prayer-Book on Scots, who dislike all forms of ritual intensely.
- (iii) Revolt against new Prayer-Book: riot in St. Giles', Edinburgh, and *Solemn League and Covenant* formed to resist it.
- (iv) Having no standing army, Charles calls out militia against Scots; but the first "*Bishops' War*" blows over without a fight.

D. Scottish Rising leads to Summons of English Parliament

- 1640 (i) Strafford brought over from Ireland to train army against Scots, April and Parliament summoned to vote funds for war, but demands redress of grievances and is dismissed (Short Parliament).
- 1640 (ii) By marching across border to *Newcastle*, Scots make it inevitable Sept. for Charles to summon Parliament and ask for money to buy them out.
- (iii) Strafford advises Charles to employ Irish Army "against this kingdom," and plots arrest of Parliamentary leaders.
- 1640 (iv) Charles nevertheless forced to summon Parliament ("*Long*" Nov. Parliament), who immediately impeach Strafford for treason.
- (v) Failing to prove treason, Commons pass Bill of Attainder, assuming Strafford a traitor.
- 1641 (vi) For fear of mob, Charles allows Strafford's execution and Laud's May imprisonment (executed in 1645).
- (vii) Scots persuaded not to advance south of Newcastle by payment of £850 a day.

E. The Last Straw

- (i) Charles, instead of playing fair, intrigues with Catholics under influence of Queen, and makes dishonest promises.
- 1641 (ii) Irish Catholics rise and massacre Protestant settlers; and English Oct. public set it down unreasonably to Charles's agency.
- (iii) Pym and other Parliamentarians, driven to despair, draw up Grand Remonstrance, setting forth all Charles's illegal deeds and necessary reforms.
- 1641 (iv) *Grand Remonstrance* having passed by 11 votes, Commons proceed Nov. to pass bill vesting all military authority in their own hands.
- 1642 (v) Charles goes down with soldiers to arrest five leading members at Jan. Westminster, but finds them gone.
- (vi) London up in arms against this attack on Parliament's privilege; train-bands called out. Charles flees to the north.

X. FIRST THREE YEARS OF CIVIL WAR

[1642, 1643, 1644]

A. Royalist and Parliamentary Resources

- (i) *Socially*: Though some of Commons join King and some of Lords join Parliament, struggle is mainly aristocracy *versus* middle-class (shopkeepers, merchants, yeomen); lower class of town or country pressed into service of either side.

- (ii) *Geographically*: North and West (where nobles hold their estates) *versus* East and South (where chief towns and industries lie); but towns in North and West are Parliamentary (e.g., Hull, Gloucester, Plymouth).
- (iii) *Tactically*: Infantry of either side similar (= musketeers and pikemen acting in co-operation). Cavalry the decisive arm. Royalist horse, trained by Prince Rupert on model of Gustavus Adolphus' Swedish troops, superior at start.
- (iv) *Strategically*: London the Parliamentary Base, against which Royalist campaigns are directed. Parliamentary towns in North and West hamper Royalist plans.

B. 1642. Campaign of Edgehill

- (i) Spring and summer pass in preparation.
- Aug. (ii) Charles, having raised standard at *Nottingham*, moves to Severn to gather more forces. *Lord Essex*, with Parliamentary Army, moves west from *Northampton* to head him off.
- Oct. (iii) Charles cuts in between Essex's army and London and waylays it at *Edgehill*.
- 23 (iv) In battle Rupert's cavalry go off in pursuit of Parliamentary cavalry and fail to use their advantage.
- Nov. (v) Charles advances so slowly upon London that train-bands entrench at *Turnham Green* and turn him back.
- (vi) Charles makes his headquarters at *Oxford*.

C. 1643. The Projected Triple Advance of Royalists on London

- (i) *Lord Newcastle* from north and *Hopton* from south-west are to march on London in conjunction with Charles's midland force from *Oxford*.
- (ii) Newcastle detained by failure against *Hull* (held by *Fairfax*); *Hopton* by failure to take *Plymouth*, their followers refusing to leave homes exposed to enemy raids.
- (iii) *Gloucester* also holds out against Royalist midland army. To relieve it Londoners under *Essex* march across *Cotswolds*.
- (iv) Though relieving Gloucester, Essex's army is waylaid at *Newbury* on return journey and severely punished.

D. 1644. Campaign of Marston Moor

- (i) Two new factors in Roundheads' favour:
- 1643 (a) Through *Pym's* diplomacy, Parliament gains promise of
- Autumn Scottish help by undertaking to establish Presbyterian Kirk in England.
- (b) *Lord Manchester*, with *Cromwell* and others, raises fresh and superior troops in East Anglia.
- (ii) Preliminaries of Battle:
- (a) Scots advance south, and get in touch with *Fairfax*, who comes out of *Hull*.
- (b) East Anglian troops, under *Manchester* and *Cromwell*, join them and besiege *Newcastle's* Royalist force at *York*.
- (c) Rupert's arrival drives off besiegers to *Marston Moor*.
- 1644 (iii) Battle of Marston Moor (on larger scale than previous battles).
- July 2 (a) Newcastle and Rupert find Roundheads posted in strong position and pass the day watching them.
- (b) Towards evening Roundheads suddenly charge.
- (c) Cromwell's cavalry (left) rout Rupert's; then, returning upon field, defeat victorious Royalist left wing; and close in on Royalist infantry in centre.

Result: The North recovered for Parliament.

XI. THE DECISIVE YEAR, 1645

A. Parliament reorganises

- 1644
Oct.
- (i) While the King's resources (from Royalists' estates, timber, plate, etc.) are nearly exhausted, Parliament can still draw on the wealth of London and other towns.
 - (ii) Despite Marston Moor, disasters continue: Essex's blundering march to relieve Plymouth leads to surrender at *Lostwithiel*, and Lord Manchester fails to secure decisive victory at *Newbury*.
 - (iii) During winter of 1644-45 Cromwell insists on two sweeping reforms:
 - (a) By *Self-Denying Ordinance* all old Parliamentary leaders resign and are replaced by Fairfax and Cromwell.
 - (b) *New Model Army* formed as permanent force on lines of Cromwell's East Anglian troop.

B. Campaign of Naseby

- (i) Marquis of *Montrose* raises Royalist army in Scotland in opposition to Presbyterian Covenanters.
 - 1645
June 14 (ii) Leaving Oxford, Charles marches north with vague idea of co-operating with Montrose.
 - (iii) As Fairfax and Cromwell pursue him, Charles turns and fights at *Naseby*.
 - (iv) While Rupert on Royalist right routs and pursues his opponents, Cromwell on Parliamentary right returns from *his* pursuit and, after dispersing Royalist centre, destroys Rupert's horse on their return.
 - 1646
May (v) Charles, after some wandering, gives himself up to Scottish army near Nottingham.
 - 1647, Jan. (vi) Scots sell him to Parliament for £200,000.
- Result:* Though a few strongholds (e.g., *Basing House*) remain to be reduced, the whole of England falls into Parliamentary hands.

C. The Split among Parliamentarians and the Second Civil War

- (i) The Politicians who had pledged themselves to accept Presbyterianism are violently opposed by Army, who are mainly "*Independents*" and adverse to all forms of religious control.
- 1647
June (ii) Threatened with disbandment, the Army takes possession of Charles at *Holmby House*, and marching on London assumes control of situation.
- (iii) Cromwell works hard for reconciliation with the King; but Charles plays with promises and finally intrigues with Scots to rise on his behalf.
- 1648
Summer (iv) While Charles, having escaped to Isle of Wight, is there detained by Governor of *Carisbrooke*, the Scots invade England, but are routed at *Preston*.
- 1648
Dec. *Result:* Army triumphs decisively over "Presbyterian" politicians, and Cromwell, by *Pride's Purge*, clears out antagonistic members from Parliament, leaving a small servile "*Rump*."

D. Charles's Execution

- 1648
Autumn (i) The Army leaders decide to try Charles for his life; and Cromwell, forced by soldiers' strong feeling and Charles's dishonest evasions, acquiesces.
- 1649
Jan. (ii) Charles tried at Westminster and convicted by a small minority of the 135 judges.
- Jan. 30 (iii) Charles's execution shocks public and begins to pave the way for "Restoration."

XII. CROMWELL SUPREME

A. Campaign in Ireland, 1649

- (i) Rupert with Royalist fleet rouses Irish Catholics in support of Prince Charles (= Charles II).
- Aug. (ii) Cromwell goes to Ireland intent on bloody revenge for massacre of '41.
- Sept. (iii) Marches from Dublin north against *Drogheda*, where he massacres garrison and part of townsfolk.
- (iv) Turning south, he does the same at *Wexford*.
- 1651 (v) Leaves *Ireton* to reduce *Limerick* and west; and returns against Spring revolted Scots.
- 1652 (vi) Cromwell's policy of dispossessing Irish landowners and settling English landlords in their place sows seeds of future discontent.

B. Campaign in Scotland, 1650

- June (i) Prince Charles (= Charles II) lands in Scotland and pledges himself to Presbyterian Covenant.
- (ii) Lowlanders, enthusiastic for forcing Presbyterian Kirk on England, hang *Montrose* and prepare to march south.
- (iii) Cromwell advances on Edinburgh, but is forced to fall back to *Dunbar* on coast.
- (iv) *Leslie's* army, hitherto inactive, cuts in between him and the border, blocking the road to England.
- Sept. 3 (v) Leslie persuaded by Kirk ministers to give battle and is defeated at *Dunbar*.

C. Campaign of Worcester, 1651

- (i) Cromwell, failing to draw Charles out of Stirling, marches north into *Perth*.
 - (ii) Charles slips out of Stirling and down the western road to England.
 - Sept. 3 (iii) Cromwell pursues by a more easterly route and catches Scots at *Worcester*.
 - (iv) After severe struggle, Cromwell inflicts final defeat on Royalist cause.
 - (v) After various adventures, Prince Charles escapes to France.
- Result:* Cromwell now supreme in State, though not actually named Protector till 1655.

XIII. THE COMMONWEALTH

A. Foreign Policy

[*N.B.*—Cromwell found English prestige abroad at its lowest ebb and raised it very high.

- 1650 (i) *First Phase:* Defeat of Rupert.
 - (a) Blake sweeps Rupert from base in Channel Isles, etc.
 - (b) Pursues him to Mediterranean and there scatters his fleet.
 - (c) Rupert retires to West Indies for piratical adventure.
- Result:* English fleet considerably improved.
- (ii) *Second Phase:* War against the Dutch.
 - (a) Dutch States, now independent of Spain, develop considerable trade.
 - 1651 (b) English Parliament passes *Navigation Act* to rob Dutch of carrying trade.
 - (c) In war, which follows, Blake and Van Tromp fight many inconclusive engagements.

- 1654** (d) English blockade and capture of Dutch vessels strangle Dutch trade and compel capitulation.
Result: England begins to assume carrying trade of the world.
- (iii) *Third Phase: War against Spain.*
- 1655** (a) Quarrel picked by demand of English merchants for free access to Spanish ports.
- 1657** (b) *Dunkirk* attacked and captured with French aid (but sold to France by Charles II).
- (c) Blake operates against Mediterranean pirates at *Tunis*.
- 1655** (d) *Penn and Venables* go to West Indies, and, though failing at *San Domingo*, capture Jamaica.
- (e) Cromwell's far-sighted scheme for populating Jamaica and for absorbing Dutch Colonies on mainland of North America.
- Result:* Cromwell's prestige abroad enormously raised, and Louis XIV is forced by Cromwell's protest to protect *Piedmontese* Protestants against persecutions of their ruler.

B. Cromwell at Home

[*N.B.*—Though aiming at freedom and much wider religious toleration than heretofore, he is gradually driven into position of military dictator.

- (i) Dismissal of the Rump (=remnant of Long Parliament left by Pride's Purge).
- (a) Rump, led by *Sir H. Vane*, cling to power, fearing either Cromwell's dictatorship or election of a less Puritan Parliament, if they abandon it.
- (b) Though promising to dissolve, they proceed with a Bill to secure their own re-election.
- 1653, April** (c) Cromwell comes down to House and turns them out.
- (ii) Cromwell's First Experiment: a Parliament of "godly men."
- (a) Members nominated by various religious bodies.
- 1653, Autumn** (b) This ("*Barebones*") Parliament meets and foolishly proposes to abolish the Universities and reform legal code on lines of Mosaic Law.
- (c) Persuaded to dissolve and commit power into Cromwell's hands.
- (iii) Cromwell's Second (constitutional) Experiment: the Protectorate.
- 1653, Dec.** (a) The "*Instrument of Government*," a new written constitution, is drawn up, viz., Protector; permanent Council of State; occasional Parliaments.
- (b) *First* Parliament quarrels with Cromwell and is dissolved.
- (iv) Cromwell as Military Dictator without Parliament.
- 1655** (a) Fearing insurrection, Cromwell appoints *Major-Generals* over eleven districts.
- (b) By attempting to enforce "godly life" (e.g., by prohibiting bear-baiting, closing taverns, etc.), *Major-Generals* become intensely unpopular.
- (c) *Major-Generals* withdrawn on re-summoning of Parliament.
- (v) Offer of the crown refused.
- 1656, Sept.** (a) *Second* Parliament, having been purged of hostile members, offers Cromwell crown, which he refuses.
- 1658, Feb.** (b) Excluded members being re-admitted, this Parliament also quarrels with Cromwell and is dismissed.
- (c) Cromwell rules alone until his death, September 3, 1658.
- Result:* The mass of nation, becoming hostile to Puritan minority, are anxious for a freely-elected Parliament and ready for return of Stuart King.

XIV. THE INTERREGNUM

(September 1658–May 1660)

- (i) On Cromwell's death, his son Richard assumes office for six months.
- (ii) General chaos: Rump return of their own accord to Westminster.
- (iii) Various generals (especially *Lambert* in England) try to assert themselves: quarrelling and some fighting.
- (iv) *George Monk*, left by Cromwell to govern Scotland after Dunbar, determines to set things straight.
- (v) Monk marches slowly south, giving General Lambert's army time to melt away, and occupies London.
- (vi) Monk insists on election of a free Parliament and recall of Prince Charles.

Result: Charles II returns to London from Continent amid general rejoicing.

XV. RESTORATION ENGLAND

A. Restoration of Landowners and Established Church

- (i) Royalist squires reinstated as a "governing class."
 - (a) As landlords and employers they dominate the peasantry.
 - (b) As Justices of the Peace they control local administration.
 - (c) As patrons of livings they gain support of parish clergy.
 - (d) As members of Parliament (or having power to nominate members) they control country's policy fairly continuously till Reform Bill of 1832.
- (ii) The Church of England re-established.
 - (a) Anglican clergy recover their livings and work hand in hand with squire-aristocracy; while Puritans and Non-conformist sects of all sorts are rigorously persecuted.
 - (b) Thus Established Church becomes an upper-class concern; while middle classes tend towards Nonconformist sects.
 - (c) Dissenters increase considerably: e.g., *Quakers*, started by *George Fox* (c. 1640), and, later, *Methodists*, started by *Wesley brothers* (c. 1730–90).
 - (d) Principle of toleration not established till William III.

B. Art and Science

- (i) Restoration writers: witty and immoral, especially dramatists, of whom the most conspicuous is *John Dryden*, author of political satire, "*Absalom and Achitophel*."
- (ii) Puritan writers:
 - (a) *John Milton* (1608–74). Born in London: educated at St. Paul's School and Christ's College, Cambridge; (1628–38) writes shorter poems, e.g., *Lycidas*, *Comus*, *Il Penseroso*; (1638–48) writes prose pamphlets, e.g., *Areopagitica*; (1649–59) works as Secretary of State under Puritan Government, though losing his sight in 1652. After Restoration writes *Paradise Lost* (published 1665), *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*.
 - (b) *John Bunyan* (1628–88). A Bedfordshire tinker; becomes Puritan preacher; imprisoned in Bedford Jail (1660–72); writes religious allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*.
- (iii) Science:
 - (a) Scientific experiment, begun by Galileo and Kepler in sixteenth century, becomes popular in England during seventeenth century.

- (b) *Harvey* discovers circulation of the blood, 1616.
- (c) *Royal Society* founded, 1662.
- (d) *Sir Isaac Newton* discovers law of gravitation and composition of light.
- (e) Astronomy encouraged by work of *Halley* and erection of Greenwich Observatory (1675).
- (f) Scientific methods begin to be applied to agriculture, business, banking, etc.
- (iv) Architecture:
 - (a) Much building done in Renaissance style.
 - (b) *Inigo Jones* builds Banqueting Hall at Whitehall.
 - (c) *Sir Christopher Wren* (1632-1723), an expert in mathematics, astronomy, and chemistry; after Fire of '66 commissioned to make a design for reconstruction; his grand plan for a new London rejected; but he rebuilds St. Paul's and many city churches; knighted in '72; buried at St. Paul's with epitaph, "Si monumentum requiras, circumspice."

XVI. CHARLES II

A. Period of Charles's Ascendency

[N.B.—Supported by Royalist Parliament, which lasts from 1661-79.

First Phase: Charles's apprenticeship to English politics, guided by Earl of Clarendon, who returns from exile with him.

- (i) Clarendon suppresses Dissenting Sects by four Acts (*Clarendon Code*).
 - 1662 (a) *Act of Uniformity*, excluding from livings all clergy who do not conform.
 - 1664 (b) *Conventicle Act*, prohibiting all Nonconformist gatherings.
 - 1665 (c) *Five Mile Act*, forbidding Nonconformist preachers to come within five miles of a town.
 - 1661 (d) *Corporation Act*, excluding all Nonconformists from municipal offices.
- (ii) Clarendon unwillingly forced into war against Dutch, who desire revenge for *Navigation Act*.
 - 1665-67 (a) *Rupert, Monk, and Prince James*, though not equal to *de Ruyter* and *van Tromp* in seamanship, fight at least one successful battle off *Lowestoft*.
 - (b) *Plague* and *Fire* predispose English for peace.
 - (c) While parleys are in progress and English fleet is laid up, Dutch make a surprise attack on *Thames*.
- 1667 *Result: Earl of Clarendon made a scapegoat and dismissed.*
- Second Phase: Charles, now master, plans a Catholic Despotism.*
 - (i) Charles chooses "*Cabal*" Ministry: *Clifford* and *Arlington* (Roman Catholics), *Buckingham*, *Ashley* (*Shaftesbury*), and *Lauderdale* (Protestants).
 - (ii) Hopes to emulate Catholic despotism of his cousin *Louis XIV*, now at height of his power.
- 1670 (iii) With cognisance of *Clifford* and *Arlington* only, Charles signs *Secret Treaty of Dover*:
 - (a) to establish Popery in England with aid of French troops;
 - (b) to help *Louis* to conquer the Netherlands.
- 1672 (iv) Parliament refuses to back Charles's promise of assistance to *Louis*, who meets with fierce resistance from Dutch under *William of Orange*.
- (v) To pave the way for establishment of Popery, Charles issues

- 1672 *Declaration of Indulgence* to Dissenters as well as to Catholics.
 (vi) General outcry: even Royalist Parliament compels Charles to withdraw the Declaration, and retorts with *Test Act*, excluding all Catholics from public office.
 1674 *Result*: Break-up of Cabal Ministry, which is succeeded by *Danby*.

B. Period of Charles's Humiliation and Recovery

Third Phase: Charles's Catholic schemes lead to Whig revenge.

- (i) Ashley, now Lord Shaftesbury, guesses Charles's Catholic schemes and forms *Whig Party*, relying on Nonconformist support, to oppose them.
 (ii) Meeting of Jesuits at house of Prince James, Duke of York, himself a Catholic.
 1678 (iii) *Titus Oates* reveals bogus version of Catholic plot to murder Charles and (unless he acquiesces) James.
 (iv) Great public alarm, increased (a) by discovery of treasonable correspondence of James's secretary; (b) mysterious murder of *Godfrey* the magistrate, with whom Oates's disclosure is deposited.
 1679 *Result*: Shaftesbury seizes opportunity and forces dissolution of Royalist Jan. Parliament, now eighteen years old.

Fourth Phase: Charles outwits the Whigs.

- 1679 (i) In new election Shaftesbury and Whigs returned with large majority.
 (ii) Whigs seek to exclude Charles's Catholic brother Prince James from succession, and nominate as heir Charles's Protestant (but illegitimate) son, the *Duke of Monmouth*; but this *Exclusion Bill* is thrown out by the Lords.
 (iii) Charles humours Whigs by allowing execution of Catholics on Oates's evidence and by banishing James as well as Monmouth.
 1680 (iv) A Second Whig Parliament fails to get Exclusion Bill passed.
 1681 (v) A Third Whig Parliament summoned by Charles to *Oxford* (away from anti-Royalist capital) and there immediately dissolved.
 (vi) Though Whigs talk of revolution, nothing happens, and by plotting against Charles's life (*Rye House Plot*) they discredit their cause; Shaftesbury flees abroad.
 1683
Result: Charles, now once more popular, rules six years without Parliament, supported
 (a) by doles of money from Louis XIV;
 (b) by loyalism of Anglicans against violence of Nonconformist Whigs.

XVII. JAMES II. [1685-1688]

A. Monmouth's Rebellion

- (i) The Duke of Monmouth, Charles's illegitimate son, poses as Protestant claimant against Catholic James.
 1685 (ii) Lands at *Lyme Regis* in Dorset with small following, but is soon joined by thousands of Somerset and Devon peasants.
 (iii) *John Churchill* (future *Duke of Marlborough*), sent by James, easily defeats them at Sedgemoor.
 (iv) Monmouth captured and executed; Lord Justice *Jeffreys* metes out cruel vengeance on Bloody Assize.

B. James's Catholic Schemes

- (i) His instrument is the *standing army* left him by Charles II, which he increases to 30,000 and stations in permanent camp on Hounslow Heath.

- 1687 (ii) He promotes Catholics to office, by overriding the Test Act, (a) in army, (b) in government (e.g., Sunderland), (c) posts in Church given to doubtful Anglicans, (d) Fellows of Magdalen College turned out to make way for Papists.
- (iii) He makes a bid for popularity with Nonconformists as well as Catholics:
(a) After persecuting them for two years, he suddenly adopts Quaker Penn's advice and offers them toleration.
- 1688 (b) Extends similar liberty to Catholics by new *Declaration of Indulgence*.
- (iv) Great public outcry:
(a) General refusal to read Declaration.
(b) Protest of Seven Bishops against it.
- June 30 (v) Seven Bishops tried for seditious libel and acquitted amid wild rejoicings.
- June 10 (vi) Shortly before, a son born to James (though some doubt the parentage), becoming later the Old Pretender.
- Result:* English people decide that, if James's son is to succeed to throne, Stuart rule can be tolerated no longer.

C. The Summons of William of Orange

- (i) William of Orange, the chief Protestant champion of Europe,
(a) as Stadtholder of Holland, has defeated Louis XIV's attacks.
(b) When in 1685 Louis revokes *Edict of Nantes* and persecutes Huguenots, William forms league of Protestant States against France.
- (ii) Having married James's daughter *Mary*, he has already been approached about taking English crown.
- (iii) On birth of rival heir to James, Whig leaders invite him to come over.
- (iv) Too late James attempts to pacify nation by withdrawing obnoxious measures.
- 1688 (v) William lands at *Torbay*: James at first irresolute, but, being
Nov. 5 decided by desertion of Marlborough and others, flees the
Dec: country.

PART III

I. WILLIAM III. Stadtholder of Holland, 1672-1702; King of England, 1689-1702.

A. William's Position as King

- (i) Limitations of his power laid down by Parliament in *Declaration of Rights*: (a) Regular Parliaments; (b) Crown not to "dispense" laws; (c) no standing-army without Parliament's leave; (d) no unauthorised taxes.
- (ii) William's authority nevertheless great, (a) thanks to strong character and long experience as ruler of Dutch; (b) because he was able to play off rival Whigs and Tories against each other.

B. William and Scotland

- (i) Though Presbyterian Lowlands side with William, *John Graham of Claverhouse*, *Viscount Dundee*, raises Highland army for James.
- 1689 (ii) They rout General *Mackay's* force in pass of *Killiecrankie*, but Dundee being killed in battle, revolt dies out.
- (iii) Pardon offered to all Scots who take oath to William before end of 1689.

- (iv) *Macdonald of Glencoe* failing to take the oath, his enemies, the *Duke of Argyll* and the *Master of Stair* (Secretary of State for Scotland), plot revenge.
- (v) In pursuance of an order signed by William, troops billeted on Macdonalds slaughter them in cold blood.

C. William and Ireland

- 1689 (i) James appears in *Dublin* with troops lent by Louis XIV.
- (ii) Protestants of Ulster driven into towns; and in *Londonderry* besieged for 105 days, till relieved by convoy of food ships.
- 1690 (iii) William lands at *Carrickfergus* with mixed army of Dutch, Swedes, June Germans, and English; occupies Belfast; and marches south on Dublin.
- July 1 (iv) Forcing passage of river *Boyne*, he defeats James decisively.
- (v) By cruel Penal Laws, Catholic Irish forbidden to hold public office or intermarry with Protestants.
- (vi) Jealous English Parliament cripples Ireland's trade (even Ulster cloth trade) by forbidding importation.

D. Whigs and Tories

N.B.—Tories = Chiefly landed aristocracy reinstated at Restoration of Charles II, standing for (a) strong monarchy (Stuart for preference); (b) supremacy of Established Church; (c) sympathy with France.

Whigs = Commercial party first organised by Shaftesbury against Charles II, standing for (a) Supremacy of Parliament over King; (b) liberty for Non-conformist sects; (c) enmity to Catholic despotism of Louis XIV.

- (i) Though called to throne by Whigs, William restrains their desire for revenge on political enemies; and with Tories' aid passes *Act of Grace* to all past offenders.
- (ii) With Whigs' aid passes *Act of Toleration* to all sects (though Test Act and Corporation Act remain in force).
- (iii) William, gaining general support from country's fear of James's return, institutes freer public life, by liberty of speech and of the press.

II. WILLIAM AND FRANCE

A. Power of Louis XIV

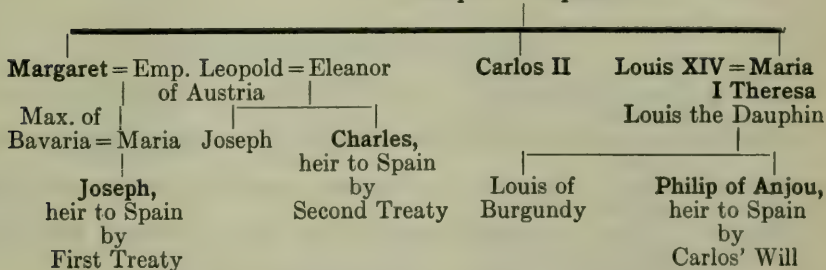
- (i) *Richelieu* (1624–42) humbled Austria by backing German Protestants in Thirty Years' War.
- (ii) *Mazarin* (1643–61) acquired *Alsace* for France (Treaty of Westphalia, 1648).
- (iii) With aid of *Colbert*, Louis (1643–1715) builds up fleet and army, employing Marshals *Turenne*, *Condé*, and fortress-builder *Vauban*.
- 1681 (iv) Seizes *Strasbourg* from Austria and plans attack on Spanish Netherlands.
- (v) After partial success in 1668 his renewal of attack is countered by resistance of Dutch under William.
- 1672 (vi) William forms League of Protestant States against France, and for this purpose welcomes his accession to English throne.

B. War with France (1692–95)

- (i) Louis having sent French troops to help James in Ireland, William forms fresh league of Holland, Brandenburg, Hanover, Savoy, and England. Even Spain and Austria (though Catholic) are ready to join against old enemy.
- 1690 (ii) By Sea — (a) *Torrington*, near *Beachy Head*, is forced to retire before superior French fleet of *de Tourville*.

- ### C. The Problem of the Spanish Succession

- ### Philip IV. of Spain



Second daughter of James II, married to a nonentity, Prince George of Denmark: herself a weak character, mainly influenced by *Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough*.

N.B.—Though attacked by ring of enemies, Louis XIV possesses great advantage of interior lines (cp. Germany in 1914) and is thus able to take offensive in all theatres.

- (i) In Spain, which is occupied in accordance with Carlos' will by Philip of Anjou.
(a) Spanish, for the most part, welcome the French King.

- 1705 (b) *Lord Peterborough*, with small British force, captures *Barcelona*, thereby securing *Catalonia* and *Valencia*.
- 1706 (c) Another British army from allied Portugal drives Philip from *Madrid*.
- (d) Spaniards rally against English, and *Peterborough* leaves Spain.
- (e) British fleet gains command of Mediterranean, and Admiral *Rooke* captures *Gibraltar* by surprise assault.
- 1704 (ii) In **Spanish Netherlands**, which Louis at first overruns: Marlborough appearing with small force pushes French back slowly on line *Antwerp-Namur*.
- 1702-04 (iii) In **Italy**, where Louis attempts to seize Milan under Carlos' will—
- (a) Austrian troops under *Prince Eugene* offer considerable resistance.
- (b) Eugene recalled to watch French Rhine army of *Tallard*.
- (c) Louis' army, though intended to assist in attack on *Vienna*, is detained by *Savoy's* defection to allied side.
- (iv) In **Central Europe**, where *Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria*, supports him:
- 1703 (a) Louis plans that Franco-Bavarian army under *Marcin*, with other army from Italy, should march against Austrian capital, *Vienna*.
- 1704 (b) Without disclosing his intention, Marlborough leaves small force to cover *Villeroi* in Flanders; marches up Rhine across *Tallard's* front and, joining *Prince of Baden's* German force, strikes southeast against Bavaria.
- May (c) Reaching Danube, Marlborough seizes bridge-town of *Donauwörth* and ravages Bavaria almost to gates of *Munich*, so that the Elector meditates peace.
- (d) *Tallard* joins *Marcin's* Franco-Bavarian army and threatens Marlborough's line of communications across Danube.
- (e) Marlborough hurries north; recrosses Danube; is joined by Eugene and, meeting enemy at *Blenheim*, inflicts crushing defeat.

B. The Decisive Struggle in Flanders

- (i) Despite sluggishness of allies, Marlborough presses French continuously.
- 1706 (ii) Wins great victory at *Ramillies*, and pushes French back on their frontier.
- 1708 (iii) After fresh victory at *Oudenarde*, crosses French frontier and captures *Lille*.
- 1709 (iv) By great national effort new French army raised and sent north under *Villars*.
- (v) Having taken *Tournai*, Marlborough invests *Mons*.
- (vi) *Villars*, coming up to its relief, entrenches in woods of *Malplaquet*: Marlborough attacks and routs him, but his own losses (20,000 men) prevent further advance into France.

C. Fall of Marlborough and Peace of Utrecht

- (i) *Mrs. Masham* (tool of pro-French Tories) supplants Duchess of Marlborough in confidence of Anne.
- (ii) By their arrest of High Church Tory preacher, *Sacheverell*, Whigs alienate public opinion and lose office.
- (iii) New Tory Ministers, *Harley* (Earl of Oxford) and *St. John* (Viscount Bolingbroke) begin secret negotiations with France.
- 1712 (iv) Army recalled from Flanders; Marlborough disgraced.

1714 (v) Treaty of Utrecht signed:

- (a) **Philip** to be king of *Spain* and *New World* on condition of renouncing all claim to French throne.
- (b) **Charles**, now Emperor of Austria, receives as compensation *Milan, Naples, Sardinia, and Spanish Netherlands*.
- (c) **England** receives *Gibraltar, Minorca, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia*.

Main Result: By acquiring Mediterranean bases, and by her building activity during the war, England attains a definite supremacy at sea, eclipsing both France and her old rival and recent ally, the Dutch.

IV. THE HANOVERIANS AND THE STUARTS

[*N.B.*—As grandson of Charles I's sister and the Elector Palatine, George, Elector, of Hanover, is invited over in preference to James II's "warming-pan" son, the "Old Pretender".]

A. The Fifteen

- 1707 (i) Scotland deprived of separate Parliament and "united" with England, though retaining separate Law Courts and Church, and some exemption from English taxes.
- 1715 (ii) Under this grievance Scots rise for Old Pretender in Highlands and Lowlands.
- (iii) *Earl of Mar* fights inconclusively with *Argyll* at *Sheriffmuir*.
- (iv) Owing to Pretender's lack of spirit, revolt collapses.

B. The Forty-five

- 1745 (i) During war of Austrian Succession Old Pretender's Son, *Charles Edward* (Young Pretender), on coming of age, lands in West Scotland.
- (ii) Highland clans under *Lochiel* and others drive back English garrison, occupy *Edinburgh*, and defeat *Cope* at *Prestonpans*.
- (iii) Pretender marches through England; but, though Government is in a panic, retreats on reaching *Derby*.
- 1746 (iv) Retires into Highlands and is crushed by *Cumberland* at *Culloden*.
- (v) By aid of *Flora Macdonald* escapes in disguise to France.

Result: Though Scots long retain their national grievance, they settle down; Highland regiments enrolled in British army; Trade and Industry flourish; Scotsmen take increasing part in political and intellectual life of England.

V. GEORGE I (1715-1727); GEORGE II (1727-1760)**A. Whig Supremacy**

- (i) The rebellion of 1715 having discredited pro-Stuart Tories, the Whigs enjoy uninterrupted power for 45 years.
- (ii) Whig magnates, though often merchants by origin, turn land-owners, and by controlling nomination and election of members, become complete masters of Parliament.
- (iii) A system is developed whereby all posts, high or low, in administration are filled by Whig nominees, and corruption becomes general.

B. Cabinet System

- (i) George I and George II, both being ignorant of English ways, cease to attend meetings of Cabinet.
- (ii) Cabinet, which hitherto had been chosen by King, irrespective of party, is now chosen by Prime Minister from his own party only.
- (iii) *Sir Robert Walpole* develops this double system of Whig supremacy and Cabinet government.

C. Financial Situation

- (i) Growth of trade had produced a new class of "capitalist" merchants, who often united in "companies" for large-scale enterprise.
- (ii) Banks to assist such ventures begun in seventeenth century (*Bank of England*, 1694).
- (iii) By borrowing money for war purposes from private persons the State had contracted huge *National Debt* (£52,000,000 in 1715).
- (iv) *South Sea Company* founded to trade with South America under Terms of Utrecht Treaty.
 - (a) Company's directors arrange, with approval of Ministers, to take over National Debt Stock from its holders in exchange for South Sea Shares.
 - (b) Wild speculation leads, on discovery of poorness of South Sea prospects, to a big financial smash, ruining thousands.
- 1721 (c) Whig Ministers, *Stanhope* and *Sunderland*, disgraced for their connivance in the deal.
- (v) *Walpole* called to office to reorganise national finance.

D. Walpole's Ministry (1721-1742)

- (i) Maintains peace at all costs, and cuts down military forces.
- (ii) Reduces rate of interest given on National Debt and forms a "sinking fund" to pay off the Debt itself.
- (iii) Abandoning old idea of excluding foreign imports for protection of home industries, he adopts a policy of freer trade and removes many export and import taxes.
- 1733 (iv) Hoping to increase volume of trade, he proposes to substitute for *customs duty* on importation of tea, sugar, wines, tobacco, an *excise duty* on their consumption.
- (v) Great outcry from nation (who largely evade customs duties by smuggling), but, though forced to withdraw his proposal for wine and tobacco, he succeeds with tea and sugar.

Result: Enormous increase in British trade; exports double in 25 years; thus increased wealth provides funds which enable Britain to win subsequent wars.

E. Literature from 1700 to 1750

- (i) Greater political liberty opens way for freer discussion in coffee-houses and clubs and for newspapers and pamphleteers.
- (ii) Prose authors (mostly pamphleteers and essay-writers).
 - (a) *Sir Richard Steele* (1672-1729) writes for Whigs and publishes many essays in the "*Tatler*" and "*Spectator*".
 - (b) *Joseph Addison* (1672-1719) wins reputation by poem on *Blenheim* (the "*Campaign*"); taken up and given preference by Whigs; joins with Steele in editing papers and in writing essays (e.g. about *Sir Roger de Coverley*).
 - (c) *Daniel Defoe* (1661-1731) writes pamphlets for Whigs; also the "*Journal of the Plague*" and "*Robinson Crusoe*".
 - (d) *Jonathan Swift* (1667-1745), Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, supports Tories; writes bitter satires upon contemporary society, e.g., "*Gulliver's Travels*".
- (iii) Poetry suffers from excessive imitation of classical models, under influence of *Alexander Pope* (1688-1744) who translates the "*Iliad*" and writes numerous poems in Heroic Couplets, e.g., "*Rape of the Lock*".

- (iv) Tendency towards this excessive classicism fostered especially by *Dr. Samuel Johnson* (1709–1784).
 - (a) Made specially famous by *Boswell's Biography*.
 - (b) Author of "English Dictionary," "Rasselas," etc.
 - (c) Great talker, much loved by brilliant circle (*Reynolds, Goldsmith, Burke, Gibbon, Garrick*, etc.)
 - (d) A Tory and a great enemy of Whig hypocrisy.

VI. HISTORY OF COLONIAL EXPANSION

N.B.—General character of Colonies.

- (i) Government encourages, but seldom initiates, leaving all to private enterprise.
- (ii) Spain and Portugal anticipate British in discovery, and so exclude them from Africa and S. America.
- (iii) Overpopulated India offers opportunity for trade-depôts only; under-populated America for large-scale emigration.

A. Age of Exploration and Piracy (1500–1600)

- 1492** (i) After Columbus's discovery of West Indies and S. America, *Cabot*
- 1497** of *Bristol* discovers N. American coast.
- (ii) North-East passage to India sought by *Chancellor* (1553) and *Willoughby* (1553); North-West by *Frobisher* (1576).
- (iii) *Drake* and *Hawkins* brothers prey on Spanish trade, but no attempt made to colonise until in 1583 *Sir Humphrey Gilbert* claims *Newfoundland* for British Crown.

B. Age of Colonisation—North America

I. Royalist "Plantation" settlements on southern coasts (1600–1750).

- (i) **Virginia** (named after Elizabeth).
 - 1585** (a) Expedition sent by *Raleigh* fails.
 - 1607** (b) *London Company* renews enterprise; but too much gold hunting instead of agriculture.
 - (c) *John Smith* reorganises settlers; land parcelled out; women introduced; tobacco planted.
 - (d) By 1660 population rises to 40,000, despite hostile Indians.
 - (ii) **Maryland** (named after Queen Henrietta Maria).
 - 1634** Under *Lord Baltimore*, this extension made north to Virginia.
 - (iii) **Carolina** (named after Charles II).
 - 1663** Extension south of Virginia made by Royalist Proprietors.
 - (iv) **Georgia** (named after George II).
 - 1732** *Oglethorpe* extends south again, partly to provide for poor emigrants, partly as outpost against Spanish *Florida*.
- [*N.B.*—General character: worked by aristocratic proprietors by use of negroes imported from Africa.]

II. Puritan Settlements on northern coasts (1600–1700).

- (i) **New Plymouth**.
 - 1620** (a) Puritan exiles in *Mayflower* land near *Cape Cod*.
 - (b) Settlement at first organised on socialistic basis.
 - (c) But flourishes only when private ownership allowed.
- (ii) **Massachusetts**.
 - 1630** (a) Founded by fresh wave of emigrants driven out by *Laud's* persecutions.
 - (b) 20,000 in all crossed before Civil War in 1641.
- (iii) **Connecticut and New Haven**.
 - 1633** Formed into separate states by settlers pushing inland.

(iv) **Rhode Island.**

Founded off coast south of Cape Cod by *Roger Williams*, a minister desiring fuller religious liberty than other colonies allowed.

[*N.B.*—General character: pertinacious settlers; trade in fur and salt fish; eventually united in Confederacy for Central Parliament and for defence against Indians.]

III. Deliberate National Aggression (1650-1750).(i) **Jamaica.**

1655 (a) Cromwell, during war against *Spain*, sends *Penn* and *Venables*, who, failing against *San Domingo*, capture unoccupied *Jamaica*.

(b) Buccaneers (e.g., *Henry Morgan*) use it to prey on Spanish trade.

(c) Rich products make its trade very valuable.

(ii) **New York and New Jersey.**

1664 Taken from *Dutch* during war of Charles II, renamed, and serve to link up Northern (Puritan) with Southern (Royalist) groups.

(iii) **Pennsylvania.**

1683 Quaker *Penn* encouraged by Charles II to push inland from New York, and founds new state with capital *Philadelphia*.

IV. French Rivalry.

1535 (i) *Acadia* (Nova Scotia) colonised via St. Lawrence River.

1608 (ii) *Champlain* founds *Quebec* and *Montreal*.

(iii) Large schemes initiated by Louis XIV's Minister, *Colbert* (1661-72).

1682 (iv) *La Salle* travels from Great Lakes via Ohio River to mouth of *Mississippi*, and claims river basin for France (*Louisiana*).

c. 1740 (v) Soldiers sent out and forts built to encircle English settlements from inland.

General Character: Enterprise proceeds from Home Government; French nation apathetic; aggressive policy of officials and alliance with Indians (cp. *Dupleix*).

C. Trade Settlements in India**I. Native History.**

(i) Bulk of inhabitants are *Hindoos*, greatly oppressed by caste-system and Brahmin priest-aristocracy.

1050-1500 (ii) Mohammedans from North invade in successive waves.

1526 (iii) The last of these, *Babar the Mongol*, becomes overlord of North India, which his successors, the great Moguls, rule from *Delhi*.

1707 (iv) The Mogul *Aurangzebe* dies and the Empire begins to split up, its Viceroy or Nabobs becoming independent; Mahratta hordes spread terror.

II. Early Trade Settlements.

1505 (i) *Vasco da Gama* being first in the field, Portugal gains initial monopoly, but, being merged with Spain at end of sixteenth century, shares in her decline.

1600 (ii) English *East India Company* obtains a footing and founds depôts at *Bombay*, *Madras* (Fort St. David), *Calcutta* (Fort St. William).

(iii) England's chief rivals are (a) the Dutch at *Java*, *Ceylon*, and other islands; (b) the French at *Chandernagore* and *Pondicherry*.

III. The French activity.

(i) On break-up of Mogul Empire, French Government extends influence by alliance with independent Nabobs (e.g., against Mahrattas).

- 1741 (ii) *Dupleix* goes out as Governor and drills native soldiers under French officers.
 (iii) British Government inactive; East India Company maintains only small bodyguard.

VII. WAR OF AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

A. Quarrel between England and Spain

- (i) The two kinsmen Louis XV of France and Philip of Anjou, now King of Spain, secretly leaguings against England.
 1739 (ii) British traders molested by Spanish in S. America (e.g., Jenkins' ear); nation demands revenge.
 (iii) Walpole, despite his love of peace, is forced into war; *Portobello* taken from Spain.
 1742 (iv) After ensuing failures Walpole retires: succeeded by *Carteret*, who reverses Walpole's policy of British isolation.

B. Quarrel between Prussia and Austria

- (i) Rise of Prussia.
 1713- (a) *Frederic William I* builds up strong army.
 1740 (b) His son, *Frederic II* (the "Great"), succeeds to Brandenburg and Prussia.
 (c) Ambitious and unscrupulous, he prepares to turn army to use.
 (ii) Weakness of Austria.
 Emperor *Charles*, before dying, bequeaths Austria to his daughter, *Maria Theresa*, and gets European powers to guarantee her throne by *Pragmatic Sanction*.
 1740 (iii) *Frederic* attacks *Maria Theresa* and seizes *Silesia*.

C. Policy of Carteret

Combination of England with a united Germany (i.e., Austria and Prussia, etc.) against French aggression.

- (i) He reconciles *Frederic* and *Maria Theresa* at cost of leaving *Silesia* in *Frederic's* possession.
 (ii) Anglo-Austro-Hanoverian army collected to defend *Austrian* (since 1715) *Netherlands* against French: marches towards Danube, and narrowly escapes defeat at *Dettingen*.
 1743
 1744 (iii) British dislike of these foreign entanglements leads to *Carteret's* fall.

D. Drawn War with France

- 1744 (i) *Frederic* again quarrels with *Maria Theresa*.
 (ii) Incompetent *Pelham* brothers (Henry, and Thomas, Duke of Newcastle) fail to support Austria.
 1745 (iii) After defeat at *Fontenoy*, British army brought home from *Netherlands* owing to menace of Young Pretender: *Netherlands* overrun by French.
 (iv) In India *Dupleix* captures *Madras*; but British-American settlers capture *Louisburg* from French.
 1748 (v) France accepts peace of *Aix-la-Chapelle*.
 (a) *Madras* and *Louisburg* exchanged.
 (b) *Frederic* gets *Silesia*.
 (c) *Netherlands* go back to Austria.

Results: France suffers badly in trade, etc., but, owing to fear of Prussia, Austria is preparing to join France; and *England thus loses her most valuable ally in Europe*.

VIII. SEVEN YEARS' WAR [1756-1763].

	Political	Naval	Continental	America	India
1751	<i>Henry Pelham</i> is Prime Minister.				To draw French from attacking British ally at <i>Trichinopoly</i> , Clive takes and holds <i>Arcot</i> . French lose influence in <i>CARNATIC</i> . Dupleix recalled.
1754	On his death his brother (<i>Newcastle</i>) succeeds him.			<i>Fort Duquesne</i> built by French.	
1755			(Autumn) France and Austria, etc., combine against Prussia. (Aug.) Frederic overruns Saxony.	<i>Braddock</i> marches against it; but is ambushed and routed (June).	Clive made Governor of Madras.
1756	(May) War Declared. (Nov.) Newcastle succeeded by Devonshire and Pitt. (April) Pitt dismissed. (June) Pitt returns.	(June) <i>Byng</i> fails to save <i>Minorca</i> . Raid on Rochefort.	(i) (July) <i>Cumberland</i> , beaten at <i>Hastenbeck</i> , capitulates at <i>Klostersenen</i> . (ii) Frederic invades Bohemia; but soon exhausted. (iii) Frederic defeats French at <i>Rosbach</i> (Nov.) and Austrians at <i>Leuthen</i> (Dec.). (i) <i>Ferdinand of Brunswick</i> drives French back from Hanover to Rhine. (ii) Frederic recovering, though hard pressed.	English and Scottish regiments sent out by Pitt.	(June) <i>Surajah</i> seizes <i>Calcutta</i> . <i>Black Hole</i> . (Dec.) Clive retakes <i>Calcutta</i> .
1757		(i) Raids on St. Malo, Havre, Cherbourg. (ii) French plan to invade England. (i) <i>Boscawen</i> pursues and beats Toulon fleet at <i>Lagos Bay</i> (Aug.). (ii) Brest fleet gets out; but beaten by <i>Hawke</i> at <i>Quiberon Bay</i> (Nov.).	(i) Frederic beaten by Russians at <i>Kunersdorf</i> (Aug.). (ii) Ferdinand restores position by defeating French at <i>Minden</i> (Aug.).	(i) <i>Abercromby's</i> overland advance fails at <i>Ticonderoga</i> . (ii) <i>Amherst</i> and <i>Wolfe</i> (by sea) take <i>Louisburg</i> . (i) <i>Wolfe</i> arrives at <i>Quebec</i> (June); captures it (Sept.). (ii) <i>Amherst</i> fails to come through by overland route.	Clive sends force which captures <i>Masulipatam</i> , thus bringing over the DECCAN to English side. Clive returns to England.
1758				<i>Amherst</i> takes <i>Montreal</i> . Canada conquered.	(Jan.) <i>Coote</i> beats French under <i>Lally</i> at <i>Wandewash</i> . <i>Pondicherry</i> captured; French power in India permanently broken.
1759				<i>Havana</i> (in Cuba) taken from Spain, and <i>Mar-tinique</i> from French.	Expedition sent against Spanish <i>Philippines</i> and takes <i>Manila</i> .
1760	(Oct.) George II dies. George III hostile to Pitt.				
1761	(Oct.) Fall of Pitt: succeeded by Bute.				
1762	(Jan.) War against Spain.				
1763	(Feb.) Peace signed at <i>Paris</i> .		Frederic left in lurch; but makes separate peace with Austria.		

TERMS OF TREATIES

A. In Europe

- (i) *Minorca* returned to England.
- (ii) *Silesia* retained by Frederic.

B. In America

- (i) *Canada*, part of *Louisiana*, *Florida* (from Spain) go to England.
- (ii) *Martinique* and *Havana* given back to France and Spain.

C. In East

- (i) *Indian* possessions secured to England; French allowed depots only and no forts.
- (ii) *Manila* returned to Spain.

CAREER OF PITT (CHATHAM)

A. Early Life

- (i) Born 1708; takes a commission as cornet in Dragoons.
- (ii) M.P. for *Old Sarum* (1735); attacks Walpole.
- (iii) Paymaster of Forces under Pelham, but refuses all bribes.

B. Period of Power

First Ministry: Nov., 1756–April, 1757.

Second Ministry: June, 1757–Oct., 1761.

Third Ministry: 1866–1868, *see* below.

C. Policy in War

- (i) Use of British sea power:
 - (a) To stop French reinforcements to Canada or India.
 - (b) To strangle French trade.
 - (c) To detain French forces on coast by naval raids.
- (ii) British money given freely to support Prussia and Hanover.
- (iii) British force used to defend Hanover, covering Frederic's flank.
- (iv) French settlements in India and America to be captured and a *British Empire to be built up overseas*.

IX. SECESSION OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES

A. Break-up of Whig Supremacy

- (i) Though still supreme in Parliament, Whigs are split into numerous factions.
- (ii) Consequently their ministries are short-lived:
 - 1762–63 (a) *Bute*: driven out of office by unpopularity of the Peace of Paris.
 - 1763–65 (b) *Grenville*: loses public favour by his prosecution of *Wilkes* for a journalistic attack on the King.
 - 1765–66 (c) *Rockingham*: offends George III by supporting *Wilkes*.
 - 1766–67 (d) *Pitt*: (now Earl of Chatham) retires, from ill health.
 - 1767–70 (e) His colleague, *Grafton*, is the last of Whig premiers.
- (iii) George III, having built up a party of his own supporters (King's Friends"), brings in a Tory Government under *Lord North*.

B. Attitude of England towards Colonies

[*N.B.*—Though mother country's interest considered paramount, British policy was not so selfish as that of other nations towards their colonies.]

- (i) Colonies mainly self-governing, but with a Crown Deputy sent out from England.

- (ii) Taxes in which colonials have no say imposed by England for upkeep of army and fleet.
- (iii) Trade to be conducted with England alone (by *Navigation Act of 1651*) and all imports likely to compete with British industries ruthlessly discouraged.

C. Beginnings of the Quarrel

- (i) **The Stamp Tax:**
 - 1765 (a) To pay for cost of recent war *Grenville* takes measures against smuggling in America and imposes new *Stamp Tax*.
 - (b) Colonies refuse to buy the stamps on principle.
 - (c) *Rockingham* withdraws Stamp Tax, but reasserts the right to tax.
 - (ii) **The Tea Tax.**
 - (a) Under Pitt, *Townshend* taxes paper, glass, and tea.
 - (b) Colonials retaliate by boycotting British goods.
 - 1770 (c) Dispatch of troops by *Grafton* leads to *Boston Massacre*.
 - (iii) **Boston's lead.**
 - (a) Though other taxes withdrawn, Tea Tax retained.
 - (b) Arrangement made by *Grafton* to cheapen tea for colonies.
 - 1773 (c) Colonials refuse "cheap" tea and *Boston* youths throw it overboard.
 - (iv) **Boston's Punishment.**
 - (a) Boston port closed; Massachusetts deprived of self-government.
 - 1774 (b) Other colonies supply Boston with food and, sending delegates to *Congress at Philadelphia*, issue *Declaration of Rights*.
 - (c) *North* essays a compromise too late; *Gage's* troops attacked and defeated by colonial militia at *Lexington*.
 - 1775
- Result:**
- 1776 *Declaration of Independence of the American Colonies, 4th July.*

D. The War

I. First Phase before France's entry (1775-1778).

- 1775 (i) Lord Howe captures *Bunker Hill* at unnecessary cost.
- 1776 (ii) Enters *New York* and drives *Washington* back into interior.
- (iii) Junction between Howe and *Burgoyne* (from Canada) planned via Hudson River, but, Howe having diverted his forces against Philadelphia, *Burgoyne* is surrounded and capitulates at *Saratoga*.
- 1777

Result: First France, then Spain and Holland enter the war against England.

II. Second Phase. (1778-1782.)

- (i) On the seas:
 - 1782 (a) Though French attempt capture of British West Indian islands, *Rodney* holds his own and defeats enemy at *Battle of the Saints* by "breaking the line".
 - (b) *Gibraltar* held by *Elliott* against tremendous odds from 1779 to 1782.
- (ii) On the American mainland.
 - 1780 (a) *Cornwallis* lands in *Georgia* and, overrunning southern colonies, works up to Chesapeake Bay.
 - (b) While French fleet under Comte de Grasse cuts off *Cornwallis* from support by sea, *Washington* evades *Clinton* at *New York* and marching south overwhelms *Cornwallis* at *Yorktown*.
 - 1781

1783 Result: Treaty of Versailles.

- (a) *Florida* and *Minorca* ceded to Spain; some lesser West Indies to France.
- (b) *Independence of the United States* of America recognised; Washington elected first President.

X. INDIA

A. Clive's Governorship (1765–1767)

- (i) Clive regularises the administration of *Bengal*, taking over collection of taxes from the native ruler.
- (ii) Improves pay of E. I. Company's servants and tries to suppress corruption.
- (iii) On his return is attacked by Company shareholders (who think their profits affected), and, though acquitted, commits suicide from disappointment.

[*N.B.*—In 1773 a *Regulating Act* passed providing

- (i) Appointments made by E. I. Company Directors to be submitted for approval of the Crown.
- (ii) Constitution to consist of (a) a *Governor-General* for all Indian possessions, with (b) a *Council of Four*, which has power to override him; (c) a *Supreme Court of Justice* independent of the Council.

B. Warren Hastings' Governorship (1774–1785)

- (i) His difficulties:
 - (a) Though thoroughly versed in Eastern politics, Hastings is opposed from start by *Francis* and two other members of Council.
 - (b) These support charge of corruption brought against Hastings by a native, *Nuncomar*; but *Impey*, as President of Supreme Court, removes *Nuncomar* by execution on old charge of felony.
 - (c) *Francis* and another of his opponents having departed, Hastings becomes master of the situation.
- (ii) His wars:
 - (a) *Mahrattas* plot with *Rohilla* tribe against British ally the *Vizier of Oude*; Hastings suppresses *Rohillas* ruthlessly, thereby securing peace in north for many years.
 - (b) British officials at *Bombay* support candidate for throne of *Poona*, and when *Mahrattas* attack, Hastings sends troops from *Calcutta*, who retrieve situation.
 - (c) In south *Mahrattas* league with French and *Hyder Ali* of *Mysore* Coote defeats *Ali* at *Porto Novo*, and, the French being worsted at sea, the danger is removed.
- (iii) His reforms:
 - (a) Reorganises finance, dividing *Bengal* into districts.
 - (b) Appoints British tax collectors in place of natives.
 - (c) Sets up native court in *Calcutta* and organises police.
- (iv) His impeachment.
 - (a) On his return, *Francis* and other enemies secure his impeachment.
 - (b) *Burke* eloquently urges numerous charges, e.g., the hanging of *Nuncomar*, treatment of *Rohillas*, etc.
 - (c) Acquittal after seven years; subsequently honoured in Parliament.

N.B.—*India Bill* of 1784 (*younger Pitt*) institutes a system of dual control which lasts until *Mutiny*:

- (a) Governor-General to be supreme over Council.

- (b) *Board of Control* appointed by Parliament to direct main policy from London; while the E. I. Company's officials administer details on the spot.

D. Era of Conquest

- (i) *Lord Cornwallis* (1786–93) humbles *Tippo of Mysore*.
 1793 (ii) Revolutionary France being now again at war with Britain, French agents stir up native princes against her and drill native troops.
 1798– (iii) *Marquis Wellesley* thereby finds opportunity for fresh annexations.
 1805
 1799 (a) In south, *Tippoo* defeated by Baird and Arthur Wellesley (Duke of Wellington) at *Seringapatam*.
 1802 (b) In north, Wellesley gets *Vizier of Oude* to cede *Rohilcund* and other territory to England.
 1803 (c) In centre, *Scindia*, the Mahratta chief, is defeated by Wellesley at *Assaye*.
 (iv) The *Marquis of Hastings* finally overcomes Mahrattas and places all India at England's feet (1814–23).

XI. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

A. The Advent of Machinery

- (i) Before 1760 manufacture mainly carried on by manual processes, though water and wind-power used for grain-mills, etc.
 (ii) From 1700 onwards scientific methods (e.g., rotation of crops, breeding of stock) applied to farming.
 (iii) Inventors begin about 1760 to devise machinery.
 1766 (a) In Spinning: Automatic spindles in *Hargreaves'* "Spinning Jenny".
 1769 Methods of drawing thread fine improved by *Arkwright*: both
 1779 devices combined in *Crompton's* "Mule".
 1785 (b) In Weaving: Automatic loom invented by *Cartwright*.
 1769 (c) Steam-engine: Perfected by *James Watt* for use at mine-heads and for driving looms, etc.
 (d) Locomotives: Marine engine made before 1800; railway engine, the "Rocket," built by *George Stephenson* (1829).
 (iv) Hand-workers, fearing loss of work, frequently break up machines.

B. Effect on Trade

- (i) Enormous increase in production of all sorts of fabrics.
 (ii) Cotton (previously excluded to protect wool-trade) admitted and manufactured in large quantities from 1770 onwards.
 (iii) Need of steel for machinery leads to exploitation of iron mines and of coal for smelting.
 (iv) This leads to increased manufacture of hardware, pins, nails, etc.

C. Effect on Industrial Conditions

- (i) **The Factory.**
 (a) Until about 1700 men worked in *small workshops* under a master.
 (b) After 1700 need for large-scale production introduces "*Domestic System*," whereby wholesale dealers give out material to employees to work up *at home*.
 (c) After 1760 advent of machinery necessitated the grouping of employees in *large factories*.
 (ii) **Shifting of Population.**
 (a) Ill-built mushroom towns spring up near factories.

- (b) Difficulties of transport cause factories to be built near the mines.
- (c) Since coal and iron are found mostly in north and west, the population shifts thither from south and east.
- (iii) Hence, whereas hitherto the towns of south and east had led the way, the new industrial centres of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and West Midlands become the most restless and progressive part of the community.

XII. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

A. The States General, the Paris Mob and the Peasants (1789)

- 1789** (i) The national finance being bankrupt, Louis XVI summons the
May obsolete "States-General" (Nobles, Clergy, and Commons) to *Versailles*; there, finding themselves thwarted, the Commons representatives vote themselves into a permanent "*National Assembly*."
- June (ii) Hearing of dismissal of Necker, the popular finance minister, the
July 14 Paris mob rises and captures the *Bastille*.
- (iii) The peasants rise, sack landowners' châteaux, and make land their own.
- Oct. (iv) Hunger-stricken Paris women march to *Versailles* and bring back King and Queen to *Tuilleries*.

B. Constitutional Reconstruction thwarted by Louis' Folly (1790-1792)

- (i) The "National Assembly," being given a clear field by flight of nobles, works to establish a limited monarchy and humble power of the Church.
- 1791** (ii) Led astray by his Austrian Queen, Louis attempts flight to German
June frontier, but is caught at *Varennes* and taken back a prisoner.
- 1792** (iii) Intrigues of royal party with Austria and Prussia force Revolution-
Spring aries to declare war.
- (iv) Mob, fearing King's escape, sack *Tuilleries* (Aug.) and massacre prisoners in jails (Sept.).
- Sept. (v) German army advances on Paris, but is turned back at *Valmy*.

C. The Convention (1792-1795) succeeds in place of Legislative Assembly appointed in '91 by National Assembly

[*N.B.*—More moderate *Girondists* (standing for France as a whole) are gradually outweighed by party of the "*Mountain*" (standing for supremacy of Paris) led by *Danton*, *Marat*, and *Robespierre*.]

- 1793** (i) The "Terror" begins under desperation at military crisis.
(a) Louis XVI executed (Jan.), Marie Antoinette (Oct.).
(b) Convention appoints small *Committee of Public Safety* to meet dangers.
(c) Girondist leaders executed (June).
- (ii) The *First Coalition* of European powers against France.
(a) In England Revolution at first meets with much sympathy (e.g. from Whigs, Fox, etc.).
- 1793** (b) Shocked by Louis' death, opinion changes; England declares war in conjunction with Austria, Prussia, Holland, and Spain.
- (iii) *Robespierre* becomes virtual dictator, *Marat* being murdered (July, '93) and *Danton* executed (March, '94).
(a) Reorganises calendar, renaming months, etc.
(b) Abolishes Christianity, substituting worship of "Reason."
(c) Meanwhile, thousands of suspects are sent to guillotine.
(d) *Robespierre* himself falls (July, '94).
- (iv) More moderate "Directory" supersedes the Convention, and turns from civil bloodshed to a crusade for the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

D. The Revolutionary Wars (from Feb. '93 onward)

- (i) Gigantic military effort of France; conscription organised by *Carnot*.
- (ii) Her enemies dissipate their strength by attacking without unity of plan, e.g. England makes descents on Brittany, Flanders, and Toulon (though *Howe* defeats French Navy, 1st June, '93).
- (iii) One by one the members of *First Coalition* make separate peace:
 - (a) In '94, *Holland*.
 - (b) In '95, *Spain* and *Prussia*.
 - (c) In '96, *Austria*, when Napoleon, driving Austrians out of Italy by victory at *Rivoli*, marches on Vienna.

1797 (iv) Napoleon, having handed over Venice to Austria and formed *North Italian (Cisalpine) Republic* under French influence, returns to Paris with plans for the defeat of *England*, which is now left to face France alone.

XIII. NAPOLEON IN THE EAST

A. Egypt and the Nile

- 1797 (i) On his return from Italy, the Revolutionary Government, wishing to keep him out of mischief, propose invasion of England.
- (ii) Napoleon, however, prefers to attack England via the East, by overrunning Egypt, and perhaps striking thence at India, where *Tippoo of Mysore* is induced to rise against England.
- (iii) England, much embarrassed by desertion of her allies and mutiny in her fleet, is taken at a disadvantage.
- 1798 (iv) Napoleon, starting from *Toulon*, eludes *Nelson's* blockade, captures Spring *Malta*, and reaches Egypt.
- 1798 (v) After lengthy search, *Nelson* discovers French fleet at *Aboukir Bay* Aug. 1 and, sailing straight in, destroys it.

Result: Napoleon is cut off from Europe, and unable to aid *Tippoo*, who is crushed and killed, *Arthur Wellesley* (*Duke of Wellington* to be) taking part in campaign.

B. Napoleon's March through Syria

- (i) Napoleon overruns Egypt, defeating military rulers, the *Mamelukes*, near *Pyramids*.
- 1799 (ii) Posing as champion of Mohammedanism, he proposes to make himself master of Turkey, and to return to Europe via *Constantinople*.
- (iii) Marching across desert and north through Palestine, Napoleon turns aside to capture *Acre*.
- (iv) Small Turco-British garrison under *Sidney Smith* holds out there until Turkish fleet arrives with reinforcements.
- (v) Napoleon abandons siege and returns to Egypt.
- 1799 (vi) Leaving his army in Egypt, where it is captured by *Abercromby* a Autumn year later, Napoleon escapes in frigate to France, when he turns out *Directory* and becomes dictator with title of "*First Consul*."

Result: Napoleon resolves to restore French prestige in Europe by force of arms.

C. Napoleon and Europe

- (i) The *Second Coalition* is formed by Pitt of *Austria*, *Russia*, *England*.
- 1800 (a) Marching against Austrians, who had recovered North Italy, Napoleon overwhelms them at *Marengo*.
- 1801 (b) Beaten also on the Rhine, Austria makes peace.
- (c) The erratic *Tsar Paul* of Russia goes over to Napoleon.

1801

- (ii) Attempt to combine Europe against England.
 - (a) Owing to unpopularity of British blockade, Napoleon persuades Russia, Sweden, and Denmark to form "Armed Neutrality" against British shipping.
 - (b) *Sir Hyde Parker* and *Nelson* promptly sent to Baltic.
 - (c) By *Nelson's* pertinacity Danish fleet defeated at *Copenhagen*.
 - (d) Tsar Paul being assassinated, his successor makes peace with England.

Result: In 1802 Napoleon makes peace by *Treaty of Amiens*, whereby English allow him to keep all country west of Rhine and recognize the North Italian and Dutch Republics formed under his direct influence.

XIV. ENGLAND AND IRELAND DURING THE WAR

A. The Younger Pitt and the War

- (i) Though confident of speedy victory, Pitt showed great energy and won complete confidence of the country.
- (ii) Immense sums raised to lend British allies; Income Tax of 2s. in pound imposed; £300,000,000 added to the debt.
- (iii) Danger of revolutionary propaganda in England faced by stern suppression.
 - (a) *Aliens' Act* for arrest of suspicious foreigners.
 - (b) *Habeas Corpus* suspended to allow of detention pending inquiry.
 - (c) Law passed forbidding meetings of over 50 persons.

B. Ireland: History during Eighteenth Century

- (i) Cause of bitterness twofold:
 - (a) Rivalry between Protestant settlers (planted by Elizabeth, James I, Cromwell, and William III, especially in Ulster), and the Catholic natives.
 - (b) English commercial policy of suppressing all Irish produce which might compete with home industries.
- (ii) Constitution:
 - (a) *Viceroy* sent to Dublin Castle from England.
 - (b) *Irish Parliament*, which makes local laws, but is subject to veto of British Parliament.

N.B.—Catholics excluded from public life; and the Protestants use Parliament to suppress and bully their rivals.
- (iii) Penal Laws:
 - (a) After battle of Boyne Catholics excluded from army commissions, learned professions, land purchase, and carrying arms.
 - (b) But these affected poorer peasants very little and gradually fell into disuse.
- (iv) Commercial Code:
 - (a) Ireland naturally very productive; but fear of competition caused exclusion from England of pigs, etc. (Charles II); wool (William III); cotton (George I).
 - (b) Trade being thus ruined, Irish took to potato-growing and fell into apathy and despair.

C. Home Rule Granted

- 1774 (i) Example of American Colonies fired Irish patriots' ambition.
- 1779 (ii) But, when French invasion threatened, Irish patriotically volunteer to defend their coasts.
- (iii) Then volunteer movement used as instrument to extort concessions from England.

- 1782 (iv) Trade restrictions abolished (1780); Irish Parliament given more or less independent power.
- (v) Under leadership of broad-minded *Grattan*, concessions are gradually made to Catholics, allowing them to buy land, to hold offices under Government, and in 1793 to vote: but *not, as yet, to sit in Parliament*.

D. The Rebellion of 1798

- 1795 (i) Pitt, favouring the admittance of Catholics to the Irish Parliament, sends over *Lord Fitzwilliam* as Viceroy to effect the reform. But Fitzwilliam goes too fast; and George III refusing to sanction the concession, Pitt is forced to submit and recall him.
- (ii) Volunteers begin to form anew, calling themselves "United Irishmen," led by *Wolfe Tone*, *Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, etc., and demanding *complete independence* (cp. *Sinn Fein*.)
- 1796 (iii) The French Revolutionaries, being invited to assist rebellion, send *General Hoche*, who, however, fails to land.
- 1797 (iv) A similar expedition sent by Dutch, but defeated by *Duncan* off *Camperdown*.
- 1798 (v) State of anarchy in Ireland culminates in scattered risings, which, however, are crushed by military; main force of rebels in South-East easily defeated at *Vinegar Hill*. *Wolfe Tone* captured.

C. Home Rule withdrawn

- (i) Pitt, alarmed by this blow in the back during the French war, determines to end Home Rule.
- (ii) Irish Parliament at first refuses to agree; but, after an election, manipulated with extensive bribery, a new Parliament votes its own power away.
- 1800 (iii) By the *Act of Union* Ireland is henceforth to be ruled directly by British Parliament; as a concession, a hundred Irish members are to be admitted at Westminster, and a promise is given (though not fulfilled) that Catholics will be eligible as members.

XV. INVASION OR TRAFALGAR

A. Renewal of the War

- (i) Napoleon breaks the *Treaty of Amiens* (1802) by:
- (a) Refusing to evacuate *Holland*.
- (b) Accepting Presidency of *North Italian Republic*.
- (c) Sending agents to *Egypt*.
- (ii) England justifiably refuses to surrender *Malta*.
- 1803 (iii) After twelve months of peace war between England and France is reopened.
- Spring
- 1804 (iv) Napoleon, hitherto "First Consul," is crowned "Emperor."
- 1804 (v) *Addington*, minister since Treaty of Amiens, is replaced by *Pitt*.

B. Napoleon's Scheme of Invasion

I. First Phase.

- (i) Napoleon builds ships assiduously and collects 100,000 men at *Boulogne* with flotilla of boats.
- (ii) In England 300,000 volunteers raised; trenches dug; Martello towers built.
- (iii) British fleet keeps close watch on Channel by patrol of light frigates.
- Result:** No opportunity is given for Army of Invasion to cross.

II. Second Phase.

- (i) The French fleets being scattered in different ports, Napoleon determines to concentrate them, but his plans all fail.
- 1805 (ii) Spain joins France, bringing her a powerful fleet.
- Jan. (iii) *Villeneuve* at *Toulon* and *Ganteaume* at *Brest* are told to effect a junction in Atlantic, and together with the Spanish fleet to gain temporary command of the Channel.
- Mar. (iv) Though *Ganteaume's* escape is foiled by *Cornwallis's* blockade, *Villeneuve* gets out from *Toulon*, picks up Spanish at *Cadiz*, and makes for *West Indies*.
- (v) *Nelson* pursues and nearly catches him in *West Indies*.
- (vi) *Villeneuve* returning is met by *Calder*, and after indecisive engagement puts into *Ferrol*.
- (vii) *Villeneuve* sails towards *Brest*; but is scared off by British squadron, and retires south to *Cadiz*.
- (viii) *Nelson*, after returning via *Gibraltar* to England, is sent with 27 ships after *Villeneuve's* 33.
- Oct. (ix) Engaging them off *Cape Trafalgar*, he breaks their line in two places and crushes centre and rear, while their van is manœuvring to return upon scene of action.
- (x) *Napoleon*, meanwhile, realising the failure of his scheme, has ordered his "Army of Invasion" to leave *Boulogne* and march against *Austria*.

C. Third Coalition

- 1805 (i) Meanwhile *Pitt* has got *Russia* and *Austria* to join England.
- Summer (ii) While *Nelson* is sailing to *Trafalgar*, *Napoleon* swoops on *Austrians*, defeats them at *Ulm* (Oct.), captures *Vienna*, and finally overwhelms them at *Austerlitz* (Dec.).
- 1807 (iii) *Prussia*, foolishly joining Coalition, is crushed at *Auerstadt* and Autumn *Jena*.
- 1807 (iv) *Tsar* of *Russia* makes agreement with *Napoleon* by *Treaty of Tilsit* to divide *Poland* and much of *Prussia* between them; old Imperial States of Central Germany is formed into *Confederation of the Rhine*, under *Napoleon's* authority.
- (v) All Europe is now at France's mercy; *Pitt* dies.

XVI. THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

A. Napoleon's Schemes

- 1806 (i) Having nearly all Europe under his control, *Napoleon* attempts by Nov. "Berlin Decrees" to establish a complete blockade of England.
- (ii) His success seems assured; his brothers and marshals planted as rulers over various states.
- 1808 (iii) By slim tactics he gets the old *King of Spain* to abdicate in favour of his brother, *Joseph Bonaparte*.
- (iv) *Spaniards* rise and turn *Joseph* out of *Madrid*.

B. England's Answer

- (i) Whig "Ministry of all the Talents," which succeeds on *Pitt's* death, fails in its attempt to make peace, and is replaced by Tory Government (*Portland*, *Castlereagh*, *Canning*, etc.).
- (ii) They answer *Napoleon's* blockade by "Orders in Council" banning all neutrals from *Napoleon's* ports (thus provoking the American States to war in 1812).
- (iii) Though foolishly dissipating forces, e.g., against *Constantinople* (1807) and against *Antwerp* (*Walcheren Expedition*, 1809), the Government gradually learns to concentrate on saving *Spain*.

C. Peninsular War (1808-1813)

I. First Phase: *Sallies into Spain.*

- 1808 (i) Wellington lands near Lisbon, defeats French at *Vimiero*, but allows their army to evacuate Portugal under terms of *Convention of Cintra*, for which he is temporarily recalled.
- (ii) Lisbon forms excellent base from which to worry French, who are already embarrassed by Spanish *guerrillas* and commissariat difficulties.
- 1808 (iii) *Sir John Moore*, in Wellington's absence, strikes northeast into Dec. Spain, aiming at main road of communications between Madrid and Bayonne.
- 1809 (iv) Napoleon tries to cut him off, but Moore, turning back for *Corunna*, Jan. eludes pursuit and, defeating *Soult* outside town, secures escape for his army by sea.
- 1809 (v) Wellington marches up *Tagus* to threaten Madrid, but, though defeating Joseph and Victor at *Talavera*, falls back into Portugal.

II. Second Phase: *Wellington on the Defensive.*

- 1810 (i) Sending *Soult* to overrun Southern Spain, Napoleon orders Mas-Summer sena to drive British "into the sea."
- (ii) After fighting at *Busaco*, Wellington falls back on lines prepared at *Torres Vedras*, wasting country as he goes.
- (iii) Massena, failing to make any impression on lines, is forced by lack of supplies to fall back after six weeks.

Result: Portugal is saved, and time given to reorganize Spanish and Portuguese armies and to improve commissariat, etc.

III. Third Phase: *The Invasion of Spain.*

- (i) The tide turns in favour of England, since Napoleon, having lost interest in Spain, withdraws best troops for use elsewhere.
- 1811 (ii) Wellington attempts to recover strategic routes into Spain.
- (a) Wellington captures *Almeida* after beating back Massena at *Fuentes d'Onoro*, but fails to take Ciudad Rodrigo.
- (b) *Beresford* attacks *Badajoz*, but, though defeating *Soult* at *Albuera*, fails to take the fort.
- 1812 (iii) Wellington recovers routes into Spain.
- (a) Attacking, while it is still winter, Wellington takes *Ciudad Rodrigo*.
- (b) Slipping south, he storms *Badajoz* before relief arrives.
- 1812 (iv) Striking in Spain, Wellington defeats French at *Salamanca*, but, though entering *Madrid* and advancing to *Burgos*, he is forced to fall back on Portugal.
- 1813 (v) With large Spanish and Portuguese contingents, Wellington drives back French through Northern Spain, and menacing their rear with force transported along northern coast, keeps them on the move.
- (vi) Defeats them finally when they turn to fight at *Vittoria*, and enters France.
- 1814 (vii) Attacks *Bayonne*; threatens *Bordeaux*; captures *Toulouse*.
- (viii) Meanwhile, Napoleon, beaten at *Leipsic*, has capitulated.

D. Napoleon's Fall

- 1809 (i) Napoleon rouses Europe by a series of blunders, e.g., seizing *Papal States* and imprisoning the Pope.
- 1809 (ii) *Austria* rises against him, but is beaten at *Wagram*.
- (iii) *Prussia*, though under his heel, trains large reserves contrary to spirit of the terms of her submission.
- 1811 (iv) *Tsar* refuses to close his ports to neutral shipping, and Napoleon resolves on invading Russia.

1812 (v) Invasion of Russia:

- (a) Crosses border (June).
- (b) Defeats Russian army at *Borodino*.
- (c) Enters *Moscow* (October).
- (d) Retires from *Moscow* (November).
- (e) Fights his way across *Beresina*.
- (f) Leaves grand army to its fate and returns to France.

(vi) Europe rises, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, and other States joining England.

1813 (vii) Napoleon defeated in "Battle of the Nations" at *Leipsic*.

1814 (viii) Abdicates in favour of brother of Louis XVI and retires to *Elba*.

XVII. THE HUNDRED DAYS

A. The Campaign

1815 (i) While the Powers are discussing reconstruction of Europe at the Spring Congress of *Vienna*, Napoleon returns to France from *Elba* and is enthusiastically received.

(ii) Prompt measures taken by Allies: *Blücher* with 150,000 Prussians concentrates on *Namur*, *Wellington* with 100,000 British, Belgian, and Hanoverian troops on *Brussels*.

June 15 (iii) Napoleon with 120,000 men hurries north and, crossing *Sambre* at *Charleroi*, determines to defeat separately, first *Blücher*, then *Wellington*.

(iv) Napoleon sends *Ney* to check British advance on *Quatre Bras* and himself attacks Prussians at *Ligny*.

June 16 (v) Since, through conflicting orders from Napoleon and *Ney*, *D'Erlon's* corps assists neither, *Ney* barely makes good at *Quatre Bras*, and Napoleon does not rout Prussians until evening.

Friday June 17 (vi) *Blücher* retires, not to his base at *Namur*, but to *Wavre*, so keeping in touch with *Wellington*; but *Grouchy*, when sent after him next day, mistakenly pursues towards *Namur*.

June 17 (vii) *Wellington* falls back from *Quatre Bras* and takes up position at *Waterloo*; Napoleon follows up in leisurely manner, not fearing arrival of *Blücher*.

B. Waterloo. Sunday, 18th June

(i) Waiting for ground to dry after rain, Napoleon does not attack till noon.

12 noon (ii) Feint against *Hougoumont* to draw reinforcements from centre of *Wellington's* line fails of its purpose. (I. in Plan.)

(iii) After bombardment, main attack upon *Wellington's* left is repulsed and pursued back by cavalry. (II. in Plan.)

3 p.m. (iv) Prussians appear far away on Napoleon's right.

4 p.m. (v) By some error whole French cavalry launched on *Wellington's* centre (III. in Plan), but British squares stand firm.

6 p.m. (vi) *La Haye Sainte* is taken and Napoleon orders final assault of *Old Guard* (IV in Plan), which is repulsed (*Colborne's* manoeuvre).

(vii) British line follows *Guard* downhill, and simultaneously Prussians burst in upon Napoleon's right rear.

(viii) French army runs for dear life to *Sambre* crossings.

C. The Congress of Vienna

(i) Paris entered; Napoleon sent to *St. Helena*.

(ii) France put under Bourbon King and reduced to frontiers of Pre-Revolution days.

(iii) Map revised: uniting Holland and Belgium, returning Lombardy and Venice to Austria, giving Russia a large share of Poland, Prussia part of Saxony, and England Malta and the Cape.

- (iv) The Powers agree in "Holy Alliance" to combat the pernicious democratic spirit of revolutionary France and to uphold the principles of Law and Order.

XVII. ENGLAND DURING THE WAR

A. Industrial Prosperity

- (i) Enormous trade boom, as a result of England's Continental rivals exhaustion and exclusion from the sea.
- (ii) Machinery multiplies production to meet the new demands.
- (iii) Cotton industry doubled between 1800-1815.
- (iv) Exports at end of war four times the value of exports before the war.
- (v) Shortage of grain leads to breaking up of new land, and farmers thrive, with wheat at two or three times its normal price.

B. Condition of Industrial Workers

- (i) The workers receive inadequate wages and are heavily burdened through taxes upon food, etc.
- (ii) Bread riots and other disturbances ruthlessly suppressed; barracks built for troops near larger towns.
- (iii) New manufacturers prove hard task-masters and employ women and children at starvation wages for excessive hours.
- 1799 (iv) Attempt of workers to combine in Unions for the improvement of their lot is defeated by the "*Combination Act*," forbidding all "combination in restraint of trade."

Result: The employee is entirely at the mercy of his employer who is frequently a magistrate and so can compel him *either to work or to go to prison*.

C. Condition of Agricultural Labourer

- (i) Process of *Enclosure* of "Common Land" had gone on through eighteenth century, since go-ahead landowners saw that large farms were more profitable and economical.
- (ii) This tendency quickened by shortage of grain during the war.
- (iii) The peasants, who had possessed rights of grazing, turf cutting, etc., on Common Land, find themselves ruined by *Enclosure*, since they can no longer keep a cow, etc., and often cannot afford to fence the plot allotted to them.
- (iv) Pitiable condition of agricultural labourers alarms authorities, who fear spread of revolutionary propaganda from France, so, as a remedy, they supplement the inadequate wages by doles from the *Poor Rates*.

Results: The poor labourer, though receiving just enough to keep himself alive, sinks to the status of a *pauper*, while the farmers thrive on high grain prices and landlords grow rich on huge rents from the farmers.

D. The Spirit of Protest

- (i) Whig and "Radical" reformers begin to draw attention to the oppression of the poor.
- (ii) Young poets like Shelley and Byron denounce the existing state of things and advocate revolutionary principles.
- (iii) In Literature the new school of the "*Romantic Movement*," Wordsworth (1770-1850), Scott (1771-1832), Coleridge (1772-1834), Shelley (1792-1822), Keats (1795-1821), rebel against the artificial style of the Pope-Johnson tradition, attempting to study Nature as she is and to express their ideas more naturally.

- (iv) The *Novel* paves the way for the study of the life of the poor (as was done, e.g., by Dickens).
 - (a) The fashion set between 1740 and 1760 by *Richardson* ("Pamela," 1740), *Smollett* ("Roderick Random," 1748) and *Fielding* ("Tom Jones," 1749).
 - (b) Carried on by *Sterne* ("Tristram Shandy," 1760) and *Goldsmith* ("Vicar of Wakefield," 1764).
 - (c) Perfected by *Sir Walter Scott* (1771-1832) and *Jane Austen* (1775-1817).

PART IV

I. THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA (Sept., 1814-June, 1815)

A. Measures to Check Spread of Revolution

- (i) "Legitimate," viz., hereditary, monarchies to be upheld: exiled rulers of France, Spain, Naples, and larger German principalities reinstated.
- (ii) Parliamentary institutions, which had been established during the war, abolished in Spain and Naples: but allowed in France and left to discretion of each ruler in German states.

B. Reconstruction of the Map

- (i) As a security against renewed French aggression, *Belgium* and *Holland* merged to form a buffer-state in North: *Genoa* and *Piedmont* in South. But France allowed to retain *Alsace-Lorraine*.
- (ii) Thirty-nine German states formed into Confederation under Austria's lead.
- (iii) Austria regains *Lombardy* and *Venice*: Prussia gains half *Saxony*, large *Rhineland* province, and (after quarrel with Russia) *Western Poland*.

C. The Concert of Europe

- (i) The Balance of Power being thus secured, all monarchs agree upon necessity of working together to counteract revolutionary movements.
- (ii) *Alexander* of Russia proposes well-meant, but fatuous "*Holy Alliance*," to which other powers give adhesion, but England, disliking foreign entanglements, declines.

D. Recrudescence and Suppression of Revolutionary Movements

- 1817 (i) In **Germany**, insubordination of students at the *Wartburg*, etc.
 - 1819 alarms *Metternich*, who, through *Carlsbad Decrees*, suppresses free expression of opinion throughout the Confederacy.
 - 1820 (ii) In **Italy**, insurrection of "*Carbonari*" etc. against restored *Ferdinand I* of Naples suppressed by Austrian aid.
 - 1820 (iii) In **Spain**, restoration of despotic *Ferdinand* leads to democratic rising at Madrid. France intervenes to crush it.
 - 1822 **But**, as a protest, Duke of Wellington quits *Congress of Verona*, thus signaling England's break with the "Concert."
- Special subjects:* Growth of idea of Nationality: characters and aims of *Metternich*, *Alexander*, *Castlereagh*.

II. ENGLAND FROM 1815-1830 (1820, George III succeeded by his son and Regent, George IV)

A. Period of Tory Repression (1815-1822)

N.B.—*Castlereagh*, the moving spirit in Government, partially shares continental statesmen's fear of Revolution.

- 1815 (i) Grain prices kept up in landlords' interest by *Corn Laws*.
- (ii) Severe criminal code (223 capital crimes) ruthlessly enforced.
- 1817 (iii) Riots and machine-breaking (by "*Luddites*"): suspension of Habeas Corpus.
- 1819 (iv) Meeting in *St. Peter's Fields, Manchester*, dispersed with bloodshed.
- 1819 (v) "*Six Acts*" passed suppressing free speech, public meetings, etc.
- 1820 (vi) *Cato Street Conspiracy* (to avenge Peterloo) detected.

B. Period of Tory Enlightenment (1822-1827)

N.B.—On *Castlereagh's* suicide, *Canning* becomes Foreign Secretary under Lord Liverpool: under his influence more liberal attitude adopted.

I. In Home Politics:

- (i) *Peel* reforms criminal code, reducing number of capital crimes.
- (ii) *Huskisson* (Tory Free Trader) relaxes antiquated *Navigation Laws*: modifies Grain Tax by introducing sliding-scale.

II. In Foreign Politics:

- 1822 (i) By ordering Wellington to quit *Congress of Verona* (see above), *Canning* protests against French intervention in Spain, and thereby completes English breach with European reactionaries.
- 1823 (ii) Aided by *President Monroe's* famous declaration ("America for the Americans"), *Canning* prevents Spain from handing over her rebellious South American colonies to France.
- 1827 (iii) Despite his principle of "Non-Intervention," *Canning* is forced to intervene with Russia to save *Greece*, which, having revolted against Turks in 1821, is now overrun by Egyptian army of *Ibrahim Pasha*.
- 1827 (iv) *Canning*, after being six months Premier, dies just before British Aug. admiral, *Codrington*, sinks Turkish fleet at *Navarino*.
(Tsar finally compels Turks to liberate Greece in 1830.)

C. Period of Tory Relapse (1827-1830)

N.B.—*Wellington*, becoming Premier, excludes more enlightened ministers.

- (i) Wellington regrets sinking of Turk fleet: withdraws help from Greece.
- (ii) Renews repression of masses: institutes regular police force.
- (iii) Though *Daniel O'Connell* is twice elected in Ireland, Wellington upholds law excluding Catholics from Parliament; until, fearing Irish rising, he yields and compels George IV to sign "*Catholic Emancipation Act*."

1829

But death of George IV leads to General Election; and the Whigs, who, owing to loss of prestige during Napoleonic Wars, have been out for nearly thirty years, are returned to office.

N.B.—The growing bulk of **Middle Class** manufacturers and merchants, who believed in *economic freedom* preached by *Adam Smith*, saw the cure for popular distress to lie in greater *political freedom*; and their views were largely reflected by the **Whigs**, the old allies of the commercial interest.

A. The Need for Reform

- (i) Owing to corrupt practices of eighteenth century, the number of electors diminished, because men who possessed votes strove to confine the now valuable privilege to themselves.
- (ii) Power of electing an M.P. often got into hands of a few individuals, e.g., the Borough Corporation, a handful of tenants, or a big landowner.
- (iii) While decayed boroughs of agricultural southeast still retained their M.P.'s, large new industrial towns of northwest were unrepresented.

B. The Passing of the Bill

First Phase.

- (i) *Lord John Russell* introduces Bill in Commons (March, 1831).
- (ii) Fierce opposition of Tories: arguments of Peel, Inglis, etc.
- (iii) Second reading passed by 1 vote: but, after defeat in the discussion clause by clause, *Lord Grey* resigns (May, 1831).

Second Phase.

- (i) At General Election Whigs returned with large majority.
- (ii) Bill passed through Commons despite Tory obstruction.
- (iii) Bill thrown out by Lords (October, 1831).
- (iv) Grey brings up Bill again in revised form to give Peers a chance of repentance.
- (v) Lords again reject Bill: Grey resigns (May, 1832).

Third Phase.

- (i) Wellington, fearing civil war, refuses office.
- (ii) Grey resumes office, the King promising to create, if necessary, enough new peers to swamp Tory opposition.
- (iii) Under this threat, Lords pass the Bill (June, 1832).

C. Results of the Bill

- (i) Vote given (a) *in Towns* to all occupiers of property worth £10 a year; (b) *in Country* to all free-holders (and tenants at long lease) of property worth £10 a year and to all tenants at annual lease of property worth £50 a year.
- (ii) Redistribution of Seats (a) towns of under 2000 disfranchised: towns between 2000 and 4000 allowed one member only; (b) seats thus set free distributed among country districts and large towns.
- (iii) The £10 limit enfranchises Middle Class only, thus producing alliance between business world and aristocratic society.
- (iv) No immediate change in personnel of Commons: **But**, henceforth, Parliament becomes really dependent on will of electorate.

IV. RULE OF THE WHIGS (Lord Grey, 1830-1837: Melbourne, 1837-1841)

A. Foreign Politics

- (i) On death of William IV (1837), *Victoria* being forbidden by "Salic Law" to rule in Hanover, British territorial connection with Continent is ended.
- (ii) *Palmerston* (Foreign Secretary) supports downtrodden nationalities, and aims at co-operation with democratic France, which in 1830 ejects despotic *Charles X* and sets up *Louis Philippe* as "People's King."
- (iii) *Palmerston* assists *Belgium* to recover independence.
 - (a) Irritated by subjection to Holland, Belgium ejects Dutch garrison.

- (b) Louis Philippe, eager to promote Belgian democracy, favours his son for Belgian throne.
- 1832 (c) Though vetoing this proposal, Palmerston co-operates with France in establishing the Independence and (by Treaty of 1839) the "neutrality" of Belgium.
- 1834-39 (iv) In *Spain* Palmerston supports popular cause of young queen *Isabella* against her despotic uncle *Don Carlos* and allows British officers to fight for her.
- (v) In *Portugal* he supports young queen *Maria* against her despotic uncle *Don Miguel*, sending British squadron to defeat him.
- 1831 (vi) In *Near East*, fearing Russian expansion at expense of decaying Turkish Empire, Palmerston supports Turks.
- 1840 (a) *Mehemet Ali*, Turkish Viceroy in Egypt, having revolted and overrun Palestine, British Fleet bombards *Acre* and crushes revolt.
- (b) France, jealous of British influence in Levant, threatens war, but does nothing.

B. Home Politics

- 1834 (i) Abolishing *Poor Law* of 1601 and the pernicious system of granting doles to underpaid but able-bodied labourers, Whigs provide:
 - (a) "Outdoor relief" for sick and aged only, (b) workhouses for able-bodied.
- (ii) To check selfishness and corruption of Mayors and Corporations, they establish system of local self-government and proper municipal elections.
- 1835 (iii) Following up prohibition of slave trade (brought about by *Wilberforce*, 1807), they compel liberation of slaves in British American colonies, paying compensation to owners.
- 1834 *N.B.*—But legislation of Whigs (as representing Middle Classes) merely tends to confirm the position of Middle Classes (e.g., as administrators of Poor Law and local government) without really relieving distress of masses.

V. THE WORKERS ORGANIZE

A. Rise of Working-Class Reformers

- (i) Influence of French Revolution produces Socialist writers, e.g., *Tom Paine* (1737-1809) author of "Rights of Man."
- (ii) *Robert Owen* (1771-1858), rising to be owner of a Lanark factory, introduces philanthropic and co-operative methods of management: wide influence of his experiments and writings.
- (iii) *Francis Place* urges on M.P.'s abolition of *Combination Law*: this ban on Trades Unions removed 1824, though by Act of 1825 they are forbidden to strike.

B. Chartist Movement

I. First Phase.

- (a) Opposition to New Poor Law and other unpopular measures, organized by *Feargus O'Connor* and other violent agitators.
- (b) But *London Working Men's Association*, led by *William Lovett*, wins the working class to a preference for constitutional methods.
- (c) They propose a further Reform of Parliament by the Six Points of their "Charter": viz., universal suffrage; secret ballot; equalization of constituencies; annual parliaments; payment of members; abolition of property qualification for members.

- (d) While signatures are collected for monster "Petition," a "Convention" of People's Representatives meets, first in London, then in Birmingham, and, though Lovett's party is opposed to violence, threatens revolution if Petition is refused.
- 1839 (e) Commons refuse to hear Petition; but Chartists fail to act.
- (f) Government imprisons Lovett and O'Connor: Convention collapses.

II. Second Phase.

- 1842 (a) Chartism revived: new Petition organized, but talked down in Parliament by Macaulay and others.
- (b) O'Connor's violent methods undermine influence of Lovett.
- 1848 (c) Success of Continental Revolutions (see below) encourages Chartists to fresh action.
- (d) A third Petition carried to Commons; but, though troops and special constables ready, mob receives its rejection quietly.
- (e) Chartist agitation dies down; But most of their demands are granted in due course of time.

VI. PEEL AND THE CORN LAWS

A. The Free Trade Movement

- (i) Traditional system of heavy dues on imports (though partly relaxed by Huskisson) was strangling commerce.
- (ii) Free Traders of "*Manchester School*" argued that any loss of revenue entailed in reduction of such dues would be compensated by the increased receipts resulting from an increased volume of trade.
- 1841 (iii) On Whig's fall, *Peel*, though *Tory* Premier, removes many import
- 1842 taxes: great benefit to trade, small loss to Exchequer.
- (iv) To make up for such initial loss, he adopts old war time expedient of an *Income Tax*; which, finding the now prosperous merchants able to pay, he subsequently continues.

B. The Corn Laws' Repeal

- (i) These laws (passed 1815 as stimulus to agriculture) admitted no foreign grain, unless high price reached; and then only on payment of heavy import tax (modified by Huskisson's sliding-scale).
- (ii) Though prosperous agriculture meant high rents for landlords and through absence of competition high prices for farmers, the poor suffered grievously from dearness of bread.
- (iii) Free Traders, led by *Cobden* and *Bright*, found the "*Anti-Corn Law League*" to procure repeal; but Peel was unconvinced.
- 1838 (iv) Wet English harvest and Irish potato blight make famine certain
- 1845 unless foreign grain freely admitted.
- (v) Despite prophecy in "*Times*," Peel fails to convert Cabinet and resigns.
- (vi) Whigs failing to form ministry, Peel returns, and, despite opposition
- 1846 of many Tories led by *Lord George Bentinck* and *Disraeli*, he passes repeal of Corn Laws with aid of Whigs.

C. Peel and Ireland

- (i) *Daniel O'Connell*, working for Home Rule by peaceful methods, wields great influence.
- (ii) But his authority defied by disorderly "*Young Ireland*" enthusiasts; and, while trying to check them, he is unjustly imprisoned by Peel.
- 1843

- (iii) Famine of 1845 produces fresh disorder: Peel proposes "*Coercion Bill*" simultaneously with repeal of Corn Laws.
- (iv) Whigs abstain from voting against it till Corn Laws safely settled; then join with Disraeli and Tories to throw Peel out.
- 1846 **Result:** The Tory or Conservative Party, being split into "Pro-Peelites" and "Anti-Peelites," is so weakened that it does not recover real power for twenty years.

VII. THE MIDDLE YEARS

A. Great Britain Recovers Prosperity

- (i) From 1843 onwards Free Trade Reforms of Peel revitalize industry: export trade quadrupled in thirty years: import of grain ditto.
- (ii) Capitalists make large profits and undertake big enterprises, e.g., main railways laid during '40s: steamship services extended: telegraph installed.
- (iii) Great influx of population to towns: during '70s competition of cheap foreign grain causes decline of agriculture.
- (iv) Old power of landed aristocracy gradually undermined.

B. Renewal of Revolution in Europe

- (i) **Spain and Portugal** (thanks partly to Palmerston's support) have both won parliamentary institutions.
- (ii) In **Italy**, Austria still occupies *Lombardy* and wields strong influence over Pope, King of Naples, and small northern states.
- 1848 (a) *Albert*, King of *Sardinia*, *Genoa*, and *Piedmont*, undertakes war of liberation; but is defeated at *Novara*.
- (b) Insurrection of *Mazzini* and *Garibaldi* in Papal States also fails.
- (iii) In **France**.
- 1848 (a) "Citizen-king" *Louis Philippe* ejected: second Republic declared with *Louis Napoleon* as President.
- 1851 (b) By coup d'état *Louis Napoleon* overthrows National Assembly; and is confirmed in position by people's vote.
- 1852 (c) *Napoleon* becomes *Emperor* and, though in theory representing public opinion, is led by ambition into reckless foreign policies.
- (iv) In **Germany**.
- (a) Though Austria remains nominal head of Confederation, Prussia institutes a *Customs League*, which gives sort of unity to German States.
- 1848 (b) On news of Revolution in Paris, German States rise and demand representative institutions.
- March (c) While *Hungarians* under *Kossuth* declare independence, Austrians also rise in *Vienna*: *Metternich* flees; Emperor *Ferdinand* abdicates.
- 1848 (d) Young *Francis Joseph*, who succeeds him, defeats Hungarians and crushes revolution in Austria.
- Dec. (e) Conference of German representatives meets at *Frankfort* and, having framed a liberal constitution for a united Germany, offers crown to *Frederick William of Prussia*.
- 1848-49 (f) *Frederick William* refuses offer; *Frankfort Congress* dispersed: popular concessions largely withdrawn; movement towards democracy checked.
- Result:** While most other States progress towards Liberty, Austria and Prussia revert to despotic government.

VIII. THE MID-VICTORIANS AND THEIR CRITICS

A. Industrial Reforms

- (i) *Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury* (1801–1885), believing in Tory doctrine of Government control over industry, initiates legislation for protection of workers.
- 1833 (ii) He obtains 9-hour day for children under 11 and 12-hour day for young persons between 11 and 19.
- 1842 (iii) On Report of Commission of Enquiry, he obtains prohibition of employment of girls and women in coal-pits.
- 1847 (iv) A bill for 8-hour day for children passed by Whigs on his initiative, though he has lost his seat in the House.

B. Education of Public Opinion

- (i) *Charles Dickens* (1812–1870), learning from experience miseries of slums, Debtors' Prison, etc., exposes them in his novels.
- (ii) *Thomas Carlyle* (1795–1881) denounces hypocrisy of age, extolling merits of Cromwell, etc. ("Heroes and Hero-worship"), Mirabeau, etc. ("French Revolution"), and even Frederick the Great ("History").
- (iii) *John Ruskin* (1819–1900) attacks industrial developments of age,
 - (a) by demanding "moral code" in commerce, as opposed to "ruthless competition" theory of Manchester School ("Unto this Last");
 - (b) by upholding ideals of artistic beauty, as against ugliness of mechanical invention (thus influencing the "Pre-Raphaelite" painters *Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Millais*).

C. Religious Revival

- (i) *Keble, Pusey, Newman*, and other young Oxford men declare Reformation to have cut England off from true stream of Christian development.
- 1833 (ii) Their views published in a series of "Tracts for the Times."
- 1845 (iii) Newman joins Roman Church; soon followed by *Manning*.
- 1850 (iv) Public alarm at Pope's action in establishing territorial Sees for Roman Catholic bishops in England.
- (v) Alarm quieted by moderation of most followers of Oxford movement, who remain loyal to Protestant Church.
- (vi) Their zeal does much to stimulate religion, e.g., restoration of churches, missionary societies.

D. Darwin's Influence

- 1831 (i) *Charles Darwin* (1809–1882), visiting South Seas on *H.M.S. Beagle*, gleans inkling of "evolution" by "natural selection."
- 1859 (ii) Publishes his theory in "Origin of Species."
- 1871 (iii) Applies same idea to human evolution in "Descent of Man."
- (iv) His theory, further expounded by *Huxley* and *Herbert Spencer*, upsets men's ideas about religion and the Bible.
- (v) Materialistic view of life results from their influence.

IX. PALMERSTON AND CRIMEAN WAR

- N.B.*—(i) Whigs under *Russell* (1846–52) fall after Palmerston's dismissal.
- (ii) Brief ministry of anti-Peelite Tories under *Lord Derby*, 1852.
 - (iii) Coalition of Whigs and Peelite Tories under *Lord Aberdeen*; *Russell*, Foreign Minister, *Palmerston*, Home Secretary, 1853.

A. Russia and Turkey

- (i) Tsar *Nicholas* tries to hasten dissolution of Turkish Empire, which English support as bulwark between India and Russian aggression.
- 1853 (ii) Tsar supports Greek Church against Roman about *Palestine shrines*; and, through *Menschikoff*, claims protectorship over Turks' Christian subjects.
- (iii) Backed by British envoy, *Stratford de Redcliffe*, Sultan rejects this claim.
- (iv) *Louis Napoleon* urges unwilling Aberdeen to support Turks: Palmerston resigns.
- Nov. (v) Russians precipitate war by sinking Turkish fleet off *Sinope*.

B. Crimean War

I. The Landing.

- 1854 (i) Turks drive back Russians across Danube (June).
- Sep. (ii) 50,000 French (*Arnaud*) and British (*Raglan*) and Turkish troops land on west of Crimean peninsula.
- (iii) British defeat Russians on *Alma*, but fail to press pursuit.
- (iv) *Menschikoff* withdraws main Russian Army N.E. from Sebastopol.

II. Siege of Sebastopol. N.B.—Invested only upon south.

1st Phase

- (a) *Menschikoff* swoops towards *Balaclava* harbour on English right rear.
- Oct. (b) *Heavy Brigade* checks Russians; but, after futile charge of *Light Brigade*, they remain menacing British right.
- Nov. (c) *Menschikoff* and town garrison attack British near *Mt. Inkerman* but fail.

2nd Phase

- (a) During severe winter terrible losses from sickness.
- (b) Medical arrangements at *Scutari* reorganized by *Florence Nightingale*.
- (c) Palmerston, succeeding incompetent Aberdeen, improves military organization.

3rd Phase

- 1855 (a) In Spring Allies reinforced (up to 200,000) from home and Sardinia.
- (b) June, assault, planned by *Pélissier* and *Raglan*, fails; *Raglan* dies.
- (c) Sept., French capture *Malakoff* redoubt; and, though British fail at *Redan*, Russians evacuate Sebastopol.

III. The Settlement.

Tsar *Nicholas* dies: *Alexander II* makes terms:

- (a) dismantling of Sebastopol;
- (b) withdrawal of Russian fleet from Black Sea.
- [N.B.—In 1875 Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Rumania revolt with Russian aid; and, though British fleet sent to Constantinople, Turks forced to liberate them.]

C. Palmerston's Ministry, 1855–65

- (i) Thrown out for fourteen months in 1858 owing to *Orsini Plot*.
- (ii) Strong foreign policy:
- (a) expedition v. Afghanistan, 1856;
- (b) war against Chinese, 1857;
- (c) forces will on European statesmen.
- (iii) Gives nation sense of a mission in the world; but sees no need for reform at home.

X. INDIA AND THE MUTINY

A. English Frontiers

I. Against the Russian Menace English employ *Afghanistan* as buffer.

- 1837 (i) First Occupation.
 - (a) Expedition to *Kabul*: new Ameer set up.
- 1841 (b) Revolt of tribesmen: annihilation of retreating garrison.
- (c) Punitive expedition and subsequent withdrawal.
- 1879 (ii) Second occupation.
 - (a) Russian intrigues necessitate intervention.
- 1880 (b) Second rising; garrison cut off in *Kandahar*, saved by Roberts' march from *Kabul*.
- (c) British again withdraw, leaving friendly Ameer.
- (iii) Ameer remains loyal: agreement with Russia, 1907.

II. Occupation of India.

- (i) *Mahrattas* finally broken by *Lord Hastings*, 1818.
- (ii) *Sikhs of Punjab* conquered in two wars (1846 and 1849).
- (iii) English annex *Scinde* (1845), *Oude* (1856), *Lower Burmah* (1852).

B. Westernising Policy

- 1836 (i) *Macaulay's* scheme of educating natives in English.
- (ii) *Lord Dalhousie* suppresses barbarous customs, admits natives to minor posts, instals railways, telegraphs, etc.
- 1848-56 (iii) Dislike of this and violation of caste (cartridges, etc.) breeds mutiny.

C. The Mutiny, 1857-58

[*N.B.*—Garrison drops to under 50,000 during Crimean War; but only sepoys in North disaffected.]

I. The Critical Months.

- (i) Outbreak at *Meerut*: mutineers occupy *Delhi* and crown descendant of Mogul Emperors.
- May (ii) *Cawnpore* garrison (*Wheeler*) besieged: lured out by *Nana Sahib*.
- June (iii) *Lucknow* garrison (*Henry Lawrence*, then *Inglis*) holds out until *Havelock* and *Outram* reinforce it.
- Sept.

II. Turn of Tide.

- (i) *Colin Campbell* arrives (Nov.): relieves and evacuates *Lucknow*.
- (ii) *John Lawrence*, Governor of *Punjab*, sends troops to recover *Delhi*.
 - (a) The Ridge occupied and held (June-Aug.);
 - (b) on arrival of *John Nicholson* town carried by assault.
- (iii) With fresh troops from home *Campbell* recovers *Lucknow* and by series of "drives" stamps out mutiny.
- 1858

III. Pacification.

Though punishing barbarities severely, *Lord Canning* merciful: Royal Proclamation promises justice and religious liberty.

D. Government of India

- 1858 (i) Transferred from East India Company wholly to Parliament.
- 1909 (ii) *Lord Morley* (Sec. of State) and *Lord Minto* (Viceroy) admit natives to Councils of Secretary of State, Viceroy, and Provincial Governors.
- 1909 (iii) *E. S. Montagu* (Sec. of State) and *Lord Chelmsford* (Viceroy) entrust native element in councils with real responsibility in minor matters.

Special Subject: Races and religions of natives; Administrative and legislative machinery.

XI. PROGRESS AND REACTION ABROAD

A. American Civil War (1861-65)

- (i) Southern "Plantation" States had retained slaves: protest in Northern States begun by *William Garrison* (1831).
- 1860 (ii) *Abraham Lincoln* becoming President, Southerners fear abolition of slavery and force on war by threatening to secede.
- (iii) The war.
 - (a) Though North isolate Southerners by capture of *Mississippi valley*, they fail under *McClellan* to capture *Richmond* and are invaded in turn by *Lee*.
 - 1862 *Meade* (b) Having defeated *Lee* at *Gettysburg*, Grant reduces *Richmond*
 - 1863 by ten months of siege warfare: capitulation of south.
 - 1865
- (iv) The war produces friction between Northerners and England:
 - (a) over capture of Southern envoys on British ship *Trent*;
 - (b) over equipment at Liverpool of the *Alabama* for Southerners' use: £3,000,000 fine exacted from England after years of arbitration.

B. War of Italian Liberation

- (i) *Victor Emmanuel II* of Sardinia-Piedmont and his Minister *Cavour* earn French gratitude by assisting in Crimea.
- 1855 (ii) With aid of Louis Napoleon they beat Austrians at *Magenta* and
- 1859 *Solferino*: and recover **Lombardy** and other Northern States.
- (iii) *Garibaldi* and 1000 volunteers, taking *Palermo*, recover Sicily: and,
- 1860 landing near Naples, liberate **South** and **Central Italy**.
- (iv) Prussia, having beaten Austria (see below), rewards *Victor Emmanuel's* neutrality by cession of **Venice**.
- 1866 (v) On fall of Louis Napoleon, the Pope's champion, **Rome** is ceded and
- 1871 becomes capital: only Tyrol and Trieste "unredeemed."

C. Rise of Germany

- 1852 (i) *Frederick William* curtails powers of unrepresentative Prussian Parliament.
- 1861 (ii) *William I* on accession triumphs over Parliament and, aided by *Bismarck* and *von Roon*, strengthens Prussian Army.
- (iii) *Bismarck* challenges **Austria's** supremacy.
- 1864 (a) Co-operates with her in wresting *Schleswig-Holstein* from Denmark.
- 1866 (b) Provokes her to war over settlement: defeats her at *Sadowa*.
- (c) Persuades *northern German States* to unite under Prussia.
- (iv) *Bismarck* challenges **France**.
- 1870 (a) Quarrel over Spanish succession: Louis Napoleon's envoy *Benedetti* "insults" William I at *Ems*.
- (b) Army of all German States under *von Moltke* invades France.
 - 1. *MacMahon* defeated at *Wörth*: retreats to *Chalons*.
 - Aug. 2. *Bazaine* caught at *Gravelotte*: forced back on *Metz* and besieged.
 - 3. *MacMahon*, moving northwest to relieve *Metz*, surrounded at *Sedan*.
- Oct. (c) *Metz* and *Strasburg* reduced: after declaration of Republic (under *Gambetta* and *Favre*) and four months' siege, Paris surrenders.
- (d) France loses *Alsace-Lorraine*: pays £200,000,000.
- (v) All German States accept William of Prussia as **Emperor**.

XII. CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERALS

- I. Conservative Ministry, June, 1866–November, 1868. Lord Derby, Premier; Disraeli, Chancellor of Exchequer, and in 1868 Premier.*
- 1867 (i) *New Reform Bill* passed, giving vote to workingmen (all town householders: £12 holders in country districts).
- 1868 (ii) Though counting on "conservatism" of workingmen, Disraeli defeated at General Election.
- II. Liberal Ministry, December, 1868–January, 1874. Gladstone, Premier.*
- (i) Despite policy of low taxation and State economy, Gladstone is forced to increase Army on *Cardwell's* short service scheme.
- 1872 (ii) *Secret Ballot* introduced in Parliamentary elections.
- 1870 (iii) *Education Act* introduced (*Forster*): public elementary schools established (but not compulsory till 1876: free of charge in 1891).
- (iv) Religious teaching to be "undenominational"; but favouritism to Church schools annoys Dissenters, causing defeat of Gladstone in election of 1874.
- III. Conservative Ministry, February, 1874–June, 1880. Disraeli, Premier.*
- (i) Home policy: State control in industry, etc
- (a) With aid of *Stafford Northcote* and *Cross*, "*Housing Bill*", passed empowering local authorities to rebuild slums.
- (b) Regulation of working conditions laid down in "*Factory Act*".
- 1876 (c) Right to strike (withheld by Act of 1825) given to Trades Unions, provided they commit no act illegal for an individual.
- (ii) Foreign Policy: Imperialism and "strong" diplomacy.
- (a) Queen made "Empress of India": second occupation of *Afghanistan*, 1879.
- 1875 (b) Khedive's shares in *Suez Canal* (hitherto mainly French concern) bought with aid of *Baron Rothschild*.
- (c) Despite Gladstone's denunciations of Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria, Disraeli supports Turks against rebel Balkan States, though only so far as to send fleet to protect Constantinople: at *Congress of Berlin* resists extravagant Russian claims.
- 1878
- IV. Liberal Ministry, 1880–July, 1886. Gladstone, Premier.*
- (i) At home extends franchise to all householders in country.
- (ii) In **Egypt**.
- (a) *Capt. Baring* (*Lord Cromer*) having been sent in 1879 to reorganize Khedive's finances, British are forced to intervene to crush insurrection of *Arabi Bey*.
- 1881 (b) *Alexandria* bombarded: rebels defeated by *Wolseley* at *Tel-el-Kebir*: temporary occupation of Egypt decided on.
- (c) *Mahdi* rises in Sudan: Egyptian troops driven into *Khartoum*.
- 1884 (d) *Gordon* sent to organize evacuation of *Khartoum*: but, against Spring *Cromer's* orders, holds on and is besieged.
- 1885 (e) Gladstone persuaded to send *Wolseley* to rescue *Gordon*: but Jan. he arrives too late.
- (iii) In **Ireland**.
- (a) Previous history: Famine of 1847 had led to
- (1) Recrudescence of "*Young Ireland*" movement: futile rising of *Smith O'Brien*, 1848.
- (2) Emigration to America, whence *Fenians* plot outrage in England and Ireland.
- (b) Gladstone and Ireland. While passing "*Coercion Act*" in 1868, Gladstone planned to redress grievances by
- (1) disestablishing Protestant Church in Ireland:
- 1869

- 1870 (2) enforcing proper treatment of tenants on new class of "absentee" landlords arisen since Famine;
- 1881 (3) fixing rents at a fair price.
- 1880 (c) Parnell determines to fight for Home Rule by constitutional methods, although the "*Land League*" he starts leads to violence and his own arrest: and murder of *Lord F. Cavendish* in *Phoenix Park* partly discredits him.
- 1882 (d) Parnell's Irish party helps to overthrow Gladstone's Ministry.
- 1886 (e) On return to power Gladstone convinced that Home Rule must be granted.
- (f) Secession of many Liberals causes defeat of Bill and fall of Gladstone.
- 1890 (g) Though clearing himself of Pigott's forged charge of approving *Phoenix Park Murders*, Parnell is discredited by divorce suit.
- V. *Conservative (Unionist) Ministry, August, 1886–July, 1892. Lord Salisbury, Premier.*
- 1891 (i) *Balfour* restores Irish prosperity by policy of lending tenants money for purchase of their farms.
- (ii) County Councils created: elementary education made free of charge (1891).
- VII. *Liberal Ministry, Gladstone, 1892–March, 1894; Lord Rosebery, 1894–June, 1895.*
- 1894 *Second Home Rule Bill* passed through Commons, but decisively rejected by Lords.
- VII. *Unionist Ministry, June, 1895–1905. Lord Salisbury, Premier.*
- (i) In **Egypt**.
- (a) While *Cromer* builds up Egypt, Sudan still disturbed by Mahdi.
- 1898 (b) *Kitchener* defeats Mahdi at *Omdurman* and occupies Sudan.
- (c) French claim to Sudan (made by *Col. Marchand* at *Fashoda*) rejected.
- (ii) **Boer War, 1899–1902** (see below).
- (iii) While failing to formulate true Imperial Constitution, *Chamberlain* proposes *Tariff Reform* to create bond between Colonies and England.
- (iv) Public reaction against exaggerated Imperialism; hence rejection of Unionists at election of January, 1906.

XIII. THE EMPIRE

A. Crown Colonies (Mostly for Purposes of Trade)

- [*N.B.*—Effects of (a) Industrial Revolution; (b) Suppression of slavery in West Indies; (c) Suez Canal, tend to develop Oriental trade.]
- (i) *Malay Peninsula.*
- (a) *Penang*, 1800.
- (b) *Singapore*, 1819.
- (c) Control extended to islands and mainland States); *North Borneo*, 1881; *Sarawak* (*Rajah Brooke's* creation), 1888.
- (ii) *Chinese Stations.*
- (a) East India Company's monopoly ended, 1833.
- (b) Chinese destroy opium stores, 1839; war leads to opening of Chinese ports and cession of *Hong-Kong*, 1841.
- (c) Second war, 1856–60; sack of Summer Palace, *Pekin*; resistance to British penetration ends.
- (d) Cession of *Wei-hai-Wei*, 1898.
- (iii) *Pacific Islands.*
- (a) Trade and missionaries breed native unrest.

- (b) Murder of *Bishop Patteson* leads to annexation of *Fiji* and other isles, 1874.
- (iv) *Falkland Islands*: annexed 1832, give us useful naval base.
- (v) *Central Africa*.
 - (a) *Sierra Leone* settlement for freed slaves, 1787; Crown Colony, 1808.
 - (b) *Gold Coast* transferred from Company to Crown, 1821.
 - (c) *Southern Nigeria* ditto, 1899; *Ashanti* suppressed, 1873.
 - (d) *Livingstone* and *Stanley* explore the interior.
 - (e) Threatened by German competition, British claim *Uganda*, 1888; *British East Africa* and *Zanzibar*, 1890.

B. The Dominions (Founded through Emigration)

I. Canada

(i) Growth of population:

- (a) After Declaration of Independence of U.S.A. (1783), many New Englanders cross into "*Upper Canada*" (*Ontario*);
- (b) Canadians repel United States attack, 1812-15;
- (c) emigration swelled by bad conditions in England after 1815;
- (d) *Vancouver Island* (discovered, 1792) and *British Columbia* opened up by Canadian traders, 1821;
- (e) Canadian Pacific Railway (1885) facilitates trade.

(ii) Political development:

- (a) Colony divided into Upper and Lower Canada, with separate constitutions under British governor, 1791;
- (b) discontent of Democrats in Upper Canada and of French in Lower Canada leads to feeble rising, 1837;
- (c) *Lord Durham* sent out: unites two provinces under Liberal Constitution, 1842;
- (d) *Lord Elgin* inaugurates truly representative Cabinet, 1847;
- (e) *Sir J. Macdonald* achieves *Federation* of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, British Columbia, and Manitoba (taken over from Hudson Bay Company, 1870); but not Newfoundland.

II. Australia.

(i) Growth of population:

- (a) East coast explored by Captain Cook, 1770;
- (b) convicts first sent to *Botany Bay*, 1788: leads to settlements at *Sydney*, *Brisbane*, and in *Tasmania*.
- (c) emigration of non-convicts increases, stimulated by gold finds (1851) and sheep-farming, etc.

(ii) Political development:

- (a) From New South Wales are formed the States of *Victoria* (cap. *Melbourne*) and *Queensland* (cap. *Brisbane*), which separate during '50s;
- (b) new emigrants settle in *West Australia*;
- (c) *South Australia* and *New Zealand* founded by enterprise of *Gibbon Wakefield*;
- (d) Federation of Australian States, but not New Zealand, 1900.

III. South Africa.

(i) Relations with Boers.

- (a) Dutch form trade station for India at Cape, 1652.
- (b) Seizing Cape during Napoleonic Wars, English keep it, 1815.
- (c) British liberation of slaves (1833) annoys Dutch settlers, who migrate across *Orange* and *Vaal Rivers* ("*Great Trek*").
- (d) British grant freedom to Boers of *Orange Free State* and *Transvaal*.

- 1876 (e) Alarmed by their quarrels with native tribes, Britain reassumes control of Boers.
- 1879 (f) This step provokes *Zulus* to war; crushed after dealing English severe blows at *Rorke's Drift* and *Isandhlwana*.
- 1881 (g) Boers declare war; and, having overwhelmed *Sir G. Colley* at *Majuba*, are granted independence by Gladstone.
- (h) *President Kruger* works to make South Africa "all Dutch".
- (ii) *British Expansion*.
- (a) *Cape Colony* becomes self-governing, 1872: *Kaffirs* gradually submit: *Natal* colonized.
- (b) *Cecil Rhodes*, having made fortune in Kimberley diamond mines, enters politics, 1880; and forms schemes of expansion.
- (c) Rhodes persuades *Bechuana* chiefs to accept British "protection," 1883.
- (d) Extorts trade concessions from *Matabele* chief *Lobengula*, entering Mashonaland and Matabeleland, British found *Rhodesia*.
- 1890 (e) As Premier of the Cape, Rhodes tries in vain to conciliate Boers.

C. South African War

- (i) British settlers around *Johannesburg* ("Uitlanders") oppressed by Boer Government.
- 1895 (ii) Rising planned by Uitlanders: *Jameson's Raid* miscarries.
- (iii) Kruger makes secret military preparations: negotiations of *Chamberlain* and Milner fail to avert war.
- (iv) **War. First Phase:** Boer offensive in three theatres inflict three reverses.
- 1899 (a) *Mafeking* and *Kimberley* besieged in West: *Methuen's* relief force cut up at *Magersfontein*.
- Dec. (b) Cape Colony invaded in south: *Gatacre* routed in night battle.
- (c) *Natal* invaded and *Sir G. White* besieged at *Ladysmith*: *Buller's* relief force repulsed at *Tugela River*.
- (v) **War. Second Phase:** Roberts and Kitchener arrive with reinforcements.
- 1900 (a) By outflanking march, Roberts drives *Cronje* from Kimberley; and surrounds him at *Paardeberg*.
- Feb. (b) Buller reaches Ladysmith: Boer resistance collapses.
- (c) Having entered *Bloemfontein* (March) and *Pretoria* (June), Roberts leaves Kitchener to finish war.
- (d) Guerrilla bands under de Wet, etc., rounded up at last by block-house system; final surrender June, 1902.
- 1906 (e) Self-government granted to Transvaal and Free State.
- 1910 (f) Federation with Cape Colony and Natal.

XIV. THE RISE OF LABOUR

Liberal Government, 1906-16. *Campbell-Bannerman*, 1906-08. *Asquith*, 1908-16.

[*N.B.*—Much influenced by Socialistic Labour party, numbering fifty members.]

A. Liberal Legislation (Extending Principle of State Control)

- (i) State provision available in theory for all citizens equally:
- 1907 (a) *Free Meals* and *medical inspection* of school children.
- 1909 (b) *Labour Bureaux* for information about employment.
- (ii) State provision confined to poorer classes only:
- 1908 (a) *Old Age Pensions* for poor folk over seventy.

- 1911 (b) *Insurance Act* compelling employers and employed to contribute towards medical attendance of latter.
- (iii) *Lloyd George's* scheme of *Land Taxation* (1909-11) to be levied on:
 (a) "Unearned increment" on sale of town sites.
 (b) Rich owners of "undeveloped land".
- (iv) *Parliament Act* limiting House of Lords' Veto.
 (a) Liberals vexed by Lords' rejection of their Bills, e.g., *Licensing Bill*, 1908.
 (b) *Liberal Budget* (1909) rejected by Lords on score of Land Tax clauses.
 (c) Liberals appeal to country: on return to power, pass Bill limiting Lords' veto to two years.
 (d) Lords refuse to pass it: Liberals again appeal by General Election.
 (e) Liberals again in majority with aid of Irish and Labour parties.
 (f) Threatened with creation of new Peers, Lords pass the Bill.
- 1910

B. Labour Agitation

- (i) Despite success of Labour candidates at election of 1906, results of "constitutional action" are discouraging: hence a growing tendency to "industrial action," i.e., strikes.
- (ii) Improved efficiency of Trade Unions by amalgamation and increased membership.
- 1911 (iii) *Railwaymen Strike* to force Directors to "recognize" their leaders.
- 1912 (iv) Great industrial unrest: 800 strikes: "Triple Alliance" planned.

C. Liberal Government's Troubles

- (i) *Female Suffrage Movement*.
 (a) Violent tactics of "suffragettes".
 (b) Government embarrassed by hunger strike of those imprisoned.
 (c) Agitation ceases on outbreak of War.
 (d) Vote given to women over thirty (1917).
- (ii) *Ireland*.
 (a) As reward for Irish support over Parliament Act, Liberals introduce Home Rule Bill, viz. Dublin Parliament to control Irish affairs: but British Parliament (still containing Irish members) to control defence, etc.
 (b) Ulstermen, led by Sir E. Carson, prepare to resist Nationalist (Catholic) Parliament.
 (c) Nationalists raise volunteer corps to oppose Ulster.
 (d) Government resolves to disarm both sets of volunteers.
 (e) Officers at *Curragh Camp* refuse orders to march on Ulster; but crisis lost sight of at outbreak of War.
 (f) Though Home Rule Bill passed, its execution indefinitely postponed.
- 1914
 Summer

XV. EUROPE FROM 1870-1914

A. Germany since 1870

- (i) Bismarck succeeds in isolating France:
 (a) by friendly understanding with Russia;
 (b) by *Triple Alliance* with Austria and Italy.
- 1882 (ii) On deaths of William I and his successor Frederick, William II succeeds to throne and dismisses Bismarck.
- (iii) Germany aims at Colonial Empire in Africa:
 (a) *German S. W. Africa* occupied, 1883, *Togoland*, 1884, *German E. Africa*, 1890.

- 1905 (b) Kaiser protests against French protectorate of *Morocco*, which, however, is upheld by Powers at *Algeiras Conference*.
- 1911 (c) Protest repeated by sending of German gunboat to *Agadir*: war barely averted.
- (iv) Germany aims at influence in *Middle East*:
 (a) Kaiser befriends Turkey: visits Sultan, 1889, Palestine, 1898.
 (b) Germans construct railway from *Constantinople to Bagdad*.
 (c) Austria encouraged to dominate Balkans: understanding with *Ferdinand of Bulgaria*: annexation of *Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 1908.

B. Preparations for War

- (i) Kaiser builds up German Navy: *Heligoland* fortified: *Kiel Canal* dug.
- (ii) Despite England's pacific policy, "militarism" grows in Germany.
- (iii) "*Triple Entente*" formed against German aggression.
 (a) Alliance of France-Russia, 1895;
 (b) Franco-British Entente arranged by Edward VII, 1904.
- (vi) After *Agadir* crisis, France adopts "3 year service" for conscripts: German Army increased: extreme tension.

C. Outbreak of War

- (i) Serbia bitter over annexation of *Bosnia-Herzegovina*.
- 1914 (ii) *Archduke Francis Ferdinand* being murdered at *Serajevo* (June 28), Austria accuses Serbian Government of complicity and presents ultimatum (July 23).
- (iii) Despite Serbia's concessions, Austria declares war (July 25).
- (iv) At Serbs' appeal for help Russia mobilizes.
- (v) Germany, while protesting pacific intentions, urges on Austria.
- (vi) Germans demand passage through Belgium.
- (vii) Sir E. Grey, having hitherto striven for peace, declares England must stand by her pledge of 1839 to preserve Belgian neutrality.
- (viii) War declared between Britain and Germany, 4 August.

	WESTERN FRONT.	EASTERN FRONT.	NAVAL WAR.
1914	<p>Liège taken, 7 Aug.: Retreat from Mons begins 23 Aug.</p> <p>Battle of Marne, Sep. 6-9; G. retirement.</p> <p>G. stand on Aisne, Sep. 15: Line stabilized.</p> <p>Antwerp falls, 7 Oct.: Line extended to coast.</p> <p>First Battle of Ypres, 21 Oct.-11 Nov.: B. line holds.</p>	<p>R. invade E. Prussia: cut up at Tannenberg, 31 Aug.</p> <p>R. invade Galicia, Aug.: invest Przemyśl, Sep.</p> <p>R. threaten Silesia: but driven back on Warsaw.</p> <p>R. occupy Carpathian passes into Hungary, Dec.</p>	<p>B. raid on Heligoland Bight, Aug.</p> <p><i>von Spee</i> sinks <i>Cradock</i> off Chile, 1 Nov.</p> <p><i>Sturdee</i> sinks <i>von Spee</i> at Falklands, 8 Dec.</p> <p>G. cruisers bombard <i>Whitby</i>, etc., Dec.</p> <p>B. raid on Cuxhaven, Dec.</p>
1915	<p>B. offensive at <i>Neuve Chapelle</i>, Mar.</p> <p>G. gas attack N. of Ypres, Apr.</p> <p>F. offensive near Lens, May.</p> <p>F. offensive in <i>Champagne</i> and B. near Loos, Sep.</p>	<p>G. reorganize and stiffen Austr. Army.</p> <p><i>Mackensen</i> breaks through R. on <i>Donajez</i>, May.</p> <p>R. retreat: Warsaw lost (Aug.) and Poland.</p> <p>R. frontier crossed: but G. checked, Oct.</p>	<p><i>Beatty</i> pursues cruiser raiders off <i>Dogger Bank</i>, Jan.</p> <p>Tentative blockade of neutral trade with G.</p> <p>G. U-Boats active in Mediterranean.</p>
1916	<p>G. offensive against Verdun, Feb.-June.</p> <p>B. and F. offensive on <i>Somme</i>, July-Oct.</p> <p><i>Bapaume</i>, the objective, not reached.</p> <p>[<i>Falkenhayn</i> superseded by <i>Hindenburg</i> and <i>Ludendorff</i>].</p>	<p><i>Brusiłow</i> routs Austr. in Galicia, May.</p> <p><i>Rumania</i> comes in: invades Transylvania, Aug.</p> <p>Rumania overrun; Bucharest lost, Dec.</p>	<p>Unrestricted U-Boat warfare threatened, spring.</p> <p>But postponed through protest of U.S.A.</p> <p><i>Jellicoe</i> and <i>Beatty</i> defeat <i>von Scheer</i> off Jutland, 31 May.</p>
1917	<p>G. retire to <i>Hindenburg Line</i>, Feb.</p> <p>B. take <i>Vimy Ridge</i>: but <i>Nivelle</i> (successor to Joffre) fails in grand offensive on Aisne, Apr.</p> <p>B. take <i>Messines</i>, June: work towards <i>Paschendaele</i>, Aug.-Oct.</p> <p>B. surprise attack at Cambrai: G. troops moved from Russian front retake ground.</p>	<p>Revolution at Petrograd, Mar.: Duma govt.</p> <p>Brusiłow attacks in S.: temporary success, July.</p> <p><i>Kerensky</i> in power, Sep.: discipline sapped.</p> <p><i>Bolsheviks</i>, <i>Lenin</i> and <i>Trotsky</i>, in power, Nov.</p> <p>Peace parleys begun with Germany.</p>	<p>Unrestricted U-Boat warfare begun, Feb.</p> <p>U.S.A. declares war on G., Apr.</p> <p>6,000,000 tons shipping lost in year.</p> <p>But B. fleet gradually masters the situation.</p>
1918	<p>G. break through (a) towards <i>Amiens</i>, 21 Mar.; (b) towards <i>Calais</i>, Apr.; (c) towards <i>Marne</i>, May.</p> <p>G. renew attack E. and W. of Rheims, 15 July.</p> <p><i>Foch</i> counter-attacks near <i>Villers Cotterets</i>, 18 July.</p> <p>Combined advance of B., F., Belgians, and Americans, Aug.-7 Nov.</p> <p>Kaiser abdicates: Socialist Govt. accepts <i>Armistice</i>, 11 Nov.</p>	<p>Bolsheviks sign peace with Germany at <i>Brest-Litovsk</i>, Mar.</p>	<p><i>Keyes</i> blocks U-Boat exit at <i>Zeebrugge</i>, 23 Apr.</p> <p><i>Ostend</i> blocked, 10 May.</p> <p>G. Fleet surrendered, 21 Nov.</p>

XVI. CHIEF EVENTS OF THE GREAT WAR 4 AUGUST, 1914, TO 1 NOVEMBER, 1918

	ITALIAN FRONT.	BALKAN FRONT.	TURKISH FRONTS.
1914	Italy repudiates her alliance with Austria and Germany.	Serbia repels Austrian invasions, Aug. and Dec.	G. cruisers shelter at Constantinople, Aug. Turkey declares for the enemy, Nov. Dec. B. occupy <i>Basra</i> at mouth of Tigris, Dec.
1915	Italy, on Allies' pledge to give her Dalmatia, declares war on Austria, May. I. undertakes campaigns (a) to recover <i>Trentino</i> , (b) to capture <i>Trieste</i> . I. win lower reaches of <i>R. Isonzo</i> , Aug.	Bulgaria joins Austria, July. Combined attack of Bulg. and Austria. Serb. Army retreats into Albania, Sep. to Dec. Allied troops landed at <i>Salonica</i> , Oct.	T. attack on <i>Suez Canal</i> repulsed, Feb. B. fleet attempts passage of <i>Dardanelles</i> , Feb. <i>Hamilton</i> lands troops at <i>Anzac</i> and <i>Cape Helles</i> , 25 Apr. Fresh troops landed <i>Anzac</i> and <i>Sewla</i> , Aug. <i>Townshend</i> advances up Tigris towards <i>Bagdad</i> , Oct. After battle at <i>Ctesiphon</i> driven back to <i>Kut</i> , Nov.
1916	I. capture <i>Gorizia</i> , Aug.	Greek Minister <i>Venizelos</i> raises volunteers for Allies, despite opposition of <i>King Constantine</i> .	Gallipoli finally evacuated, Jan. Capitulation of <i>Townshend</i> at <i>Kut</i> , Apr. Railway begun from <i>Suez</i> to Palestine: Arabs revolt against Turks (Summer).
1917	Failure of I. offensive towards Trieste, Jun.-Aug. G. and A. break through at <i>Caporetto</i> , 24 Oct. General retreat of I.: but stand on <i>Piave River</i> .	Constantine forced to abdicate from Gk. throne, June. Salonica Army strengthened, but inactive through sickness.	Unsuccessful attacks on <i>Gaza</i> (Spring). <i>Maude</i> advances up Tigris: wins battle at <i>Ctesiphon</i> : captures <i>Bagdad</i> , Mar. <i>Allenby</i> takes <i>Gaza</i> , Nov.: <i>Jerusalem</i> , Dec.
1918	I. and B. rout Austria on <i>Piave</i> , Oct. Austria accepts armistice terms, 4 Nov.	<i>Franchet d'Esperey</i> , commanding joint offensive, routs Bulgars, 15-30 Sep. Bulg. surrenders, 30 Sep.	Allenby routs Turks on plain of <i>Esdraelon</i> , 19 Sep. Reaches <i>Damascus</i> , 30 Sep.: <i>Aleppo</i> , 26 Oct. Armistice accepted by Turks, 30 Oct.

Asquith forms Coalition, May, 1915: Haig succeeds French, December, 1915: Robertson succeeds Kitchener, June, 1916: Ll. George succeeds Asquith, December, 1916.

XVII. THE PEACE, 1918-1921

A. Conference of Versailles (Treaty Signed 28 June, 1919)

I. Punishment of Germany.

- (i) Under Armistice Terms surrender of war material and temporary occupation of Rhineland towns.
- (ii) Indemnity, ultimately fixed at £6,500,000,000.
- (iii) Loss of *Alsace-Lorraine*, part of *E. Prussia* and *Schleswig*, all her Colonies.

II. Redrawing of Map.

- (i) Self-determination of **Austria's** subject peoples.
 - (a) *Trieste, Trentino*, and part of *Albania* to **Italy**.
 - (b) *Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina* to form with Serbia and Montenegro a new **Jugo-Slave** State.
 - (c) *Transylvania* to **Rumania**: *Galicia* to **Poland**.
 - (d) *Bohemia* becomes independent **Czecko-Slovak** State.
 - (e) *Hungary* independent.
- (ii) **Turks** left in *Constantinople*; but cede W. Coast of *Asia-Minor* to Greece: *Syria* to France: *Palestine* and *Mesopotamia* to England under "Mandate" to League of Nations.

III. League of Nations.

- (i) Covenant incorporated in Treaty at wish of President Wilson.
- (ii) Rejected by United States.
- (iii) Flouted by Poles and others; but does much solid work.

B. Bolshevik Russia

- (i) *Lenin* and *Trotsky* gain control November, 1917: make peace with Germany, March, 1918.
- (ii) Give land to peasants: kill off bourgeoisie.
- (iii) Allies make war on Bolsheviks:
 - (a) British expedition to *Archangel*;
 - (b) British and French aid to *Koltchak* in *Siberia*;
 - (c) to *Denikin* in S. Russia.
- (iv) Though Bolshevik socialistic schemes miscarry, they maintain hold on Russia.

C. England's Troubles

I. Imperial.

- (i) In India, despite concessions, Nationalists agitate for complete independence: violence at *Amritsar*.
- (ii) In Egypt England extends self-government to natives.
- (iii) In Ireland
 - (a) Dublin rising under *Sir Roger Casement* suppressed Easter, 1916;
 - (b) *Sinn Fein* demands complete independence and organizes reign of terror;
 - (c) Viscount French as Viceroy: stern suppression, but reprisals prove useless;
 - (d) "Dominion" status granted, 1921 (Autumn).

II. Domestic.

- 1920 (i) Disappointed by Conservative tendencies of Coalition Government (re-elected, Dec., 1918), extremists claim to control country's policy by "Direct Action," but get little backing from masses.
- (ii) Though country impoverished by war expenditure, workers claim wage above pre-war standard.
- (iii) Trade "slump" causes unemployment and reduction of wages: hence strikes.
- 1921 (iv) Coal miners strike; but, getting no support from railway and transport workers ("Triple Alliance"), are beaten.

FOREIGN	HOME	IMPERIAL
1921 (1) Disarmament conference at Washington. (2) League of Nations reconciles Finland and Sweden.		
1922 (1) French disappointed of reparation payment. (2) Fall of German mark begins. (3) Turks after defeat by Greeks threaten Dardanelles.	(1) Lloyd George resigns—End of coalition. (2) Election (Nov.) conservative government under Bonar Law.	
1923 (1) French occupy Ruhr (Jan.). (2) Mussolini threatens war on Greece.	(1) Baldwin funds U. S. A. debt. (2) Bonar Law retires; succeeded by Baldwin (May). (3) Election on Tariff issue (Dec.) Conservative defeat.	Imperial conference meets: Preferential Tariff mooted.
1924 (1) Poincaré displaced by Herriot in France. (2) Dawes Reparation scheme accepted. (3) Protocol of mutual assistance mooted.	(1) Labour government under MacDonald. (2) Treaty planned with Russia—Fall of Labour government. (3) Election (Nov.) conservative majority of 200 under Baldwin.	Imperial exhibition at Wembley.
1925 (1) Locarno Pact (Oct.). (2) League of Nations reconciles Greece and Bulgaria.	(1) Gold standard restored. (2) Miners' strike threatened; averted by commission and subsidy.	Control of Sudan refused to Egyptian government.
1926 Germany after obstruction by Brazil admitted to League of Nations.	(1) Report of coal commission (Ap.). (2) General Strike (May).	Imperial conference: Dominion autonomy asserted.
1927 Naval disarmament discussed at Geneva.	(1) Act illegalizing General Strike. (2) Industrial conference of men and masters planned (Dec.).	(1) Troops sent to defend Shanghai. (2) Commission on Indian constitution appointed.

PART VI

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THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION

APPENDIX II

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APPENDIX I

THE MACHINERY OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION

THE British Constitution is not a written document. Many written laws or statutes have of course at various stages influenced or altered its form (thus the Parliament Act of 1911 determines the present powers of the House of Lords); but among such written laws many are long since out of date; and though the Constitution is in a sense the outcome of such measures as the Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights or the Reform Bill of 1832, the bearing of these upon the practical situation of to-day is scarcely evident. No modern king would dream of raising illegal taxes; and the franchise of 1832 has been widened beyond recognition.

The fact is that custom, precedent and etiquette play the chief part in the smooth working of political machinery. Everyone, for instance, recognizes the proper function of the Cabinet and the meaning of Cabinet responsibility, though these are nowhere stated in any legal measure or even in any parliamentary resolution. Ambiguous and difficult points are solved, when they arise, not before; and then only, as a rule, by tacit agreement between parties or by the verdict of public opinion. Thus recently much controversy arose over the question whether a Prime Minister is himself bound to make reply to a vote of censure moved by the Opposition; and Mr. Baldwin's refusal to speak will presumably have decided the point for the future.

The result is that the British Constitution is wholly unsystematized, at points even illogical; and if any attempt were made to carry out to the letter every law on the statute book, a deadlock would immediately follow. But owing to the innate sense of political propriety characteristic of the British race, acute controversy seldom occurs. The very flexibility of the Constitution is its chief merit. Prime ministers, and private members alike are really governed more by a regard for tradition and good form than by any reference to written phrase or formula. It may be said indeed with truth that from year to year, almost from day to day, the British Constitution is under a process of continual change; and this way it suits itself to the needs of the hour better than if it were one modelled on a cast-iron system.

Under the monarch—now in practice little more than a constitutional figure-head—Great Britain (and in theory at least the entire British Empire) is governed by the two Houses of Parliament, the Lords or Upper House and the Commons or Lower House.

The House of Lords comprises upwards of 700 peers. The bulk of these sit there by hereditary title; but to such must be added a certain number of "life" peers, a selection from the peers of Scotland and Ireland chosen by fellow-nobles, and a selection from the bishops of the Established English Church, chosen by virtue of their seniority of appointment. It will thus be seen, that, while reflecting in a measure the more solid and conservative body of national opinion, the Peers in fact represent nobody except themselves. Though in former centuries the predominant voice in the country's government, they have recently been reduced, as will be shewn, to the function of a mere brake on over-hasty legislation. Their debates are dignified, but as a rule ill-attended; and dissatisfaction both with their composition and with the recent limitation of their powers has given rise to much discussion of reform.

Members of the House of Commons, just over 600 in number, owe their position to direct election by the people. For election purposes the country is divided into constituencies of varying size, some covering large country districts, others the crowded areas of great towns. The latter are normally allowed several members in proportion to their size, but no exact system of numerical equality exists.

When an election takes place in a constituency candidates are usually nominated by each of the three great parties, Conservative, Liberal and Labour. The choice of a candidate is a matter of arrangement between the local party committee and the party headquarters. Independent candidates often stand, but with no such organisation behind them they stand but little chance. Each candidate issues at the outset of the campaign a statement of the policy he intends, if elected, to support. Canvassing is keen, but the law against corruption strict. The franchise is wide—almost every man over twenty-one can exercise a vote, and most women over thirty; even the latter age-limitation will soon probably be brought into line with the male franchise.

After a general election the King's invitation to form a Cabinet goes normally to the recognised leader of the party most successful at the polls. If he cannot command a majority of votes in the House of Commons, he must secure himself a majority by coalition with some other party; and from among his adherents * he selects the ministers who shall take charge of the various executive departments, the Home Office, Foreign Office, Board of Education, Admiralty, War Office and so forth. Responsibility for policy is shared by the whole Cabinet, but each minister is individually responsible for the workings of his own department and must be prepared to answer questions thereon at the daily sittings of the House. When Parliament meets, the King opens the year's session in person and his speech which is drawn up by the new government foreshadows whatever legislation is in contemplation. Private members are, it is true, allowed some opportunity of introducing "bills" (for so a measure is called until it becomes a full-fledged law); but the bulk of legislation is initiated by the Cabinet who can usually count on the well-disciplined support of their adherents. In the passing of a "bill" through the Commons there are three stages: the first "reading" is a pure formality and simply announces the scope and names of the new measure; before the second "reading" there is a debate upon the whole principle involved. If it then gains a majority of votes, the third or "Committee" stage is reached, during which the details of the bill are discussed and, if necessary, amended clause by clause. Emerging in its final form at the third "reading," the bill then goes to the Lords, who have the power either to reject it altogether or to send it back in an amended form to the Commons. If passed by the Lords, the bill goes to the King for royal assent—an assent which nowadays is invariably given; for Queen Victoria was the last sovereign to exercise the right of veto. If, however, the Lords reject the bill, their rejection is not final. Under the Parliament Act of 1911 it is enacted that, should the Commons present it in three successive sessions, it automatically receives the royal assent at the third time of asking, that is, after the lapse of some two years from its first presentation.† It will thus be seen that the Commons have the ultimate voice in legislation, provided, of course, that nothing occurs in this two-year interval to upset the existing government.

The life of a government is at most of five years' duration, for after that period a general election is compulsory. If before that time an adverse vote in the Commons shows that the government have lost the confidence of the House over a matter of real importance, it is customary for the Premier to tender his resignation to the King. His Majesty may then either invite the leader of another party to form a government in the hope of commanding a sufficient majority in

* In time past it was usual for a large number of the Cabinet to be drawn from the House of Lords; but the predominant importance of the Commons has tended recently to confine the choice not only of the Premier, but of Ministers to its ranks.

† An exception to this rule occurs in the case of finance bills. The voting of taxes being by long historical tradition the special prerogative of the Commons, the Lords are not now permitted in any way to delay a financial measure.

the House, or he may dissolve the existing Parliament, and cause a general election to be held.

We said at the outset that the Parliament at Westminster is in theory the sovereign body of the entire British Empire. In practice, however, the great Dominions are to all intents and purposes self-governing. Even a declaration of war made by the British Government can hardly be said to be inevitably binding on Dominion governments; and with their internal legislation and administration no interference is attempted. No financial payments are made to the British Exchequer; and whatever part the Dominions choose to bear in the maintenance of warships or armed forces is left entirely to their own discretion. This loose and easy-going connection between colonies and mother country has hitherto worked surprisingly well; but the need for a concerted policy has brought into being the Imperial Conference, attended by Dominion Premiers or their representatives and henceforth to be annually convened. Similarly a conference has been instituted for the representatives of the "Crown" colonies which are still governed by men appointed by the King on the Prime Minister's advice and therefore responsible to the British Parliament.

There is here no space to deal at length with judicial institutions; but one thing is perhaps worth noting. Judges are appointed by the King on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. But though the Lord Chancellor is himself the nominee of the Prime Minister and holds office only so long as the Cabinet of which he is a member remains in power, yet his own party sentiments are in no way reflected by the judges whom he appoints. They become judges for life; and their decisions are recognised as utterly free from party bias. It is their business to administer and interpret the law by whatever party majority it may be made; and the honorable tradition of judicial impartiality is very notably sustained.



APPENDIX II

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following is a list of books suitable for the use of students who wish to enlarge or to deepen their knowledge of any particular branch or period of English history. As the list is intended for students rather than for their teachers, I have tried to select such books as are not only within the grasp of youthful readers but also calculated to arouse their interest. Among them, therefore, I have included many novels which, while illustrative of some phase or other of English life, have no claim to rank as authentic history.

I have marked with an asterisk (*) books specially to be recommended to younger readers and with a dagger (†) those likely to be of special interest to their seniors.

A. GENERAL

I. HISTORIES PROPER.

- Oman. *England before the Conquest.*
† Davis. *England under the Normans and Angevins.*
Vickers. *England in the Later Middle Ages.*
Innes. *England under the Tudors.*
† Trevelyan. *England under the Stuarts.*
Grant Robertson. *England under the Hanoverians.*
Marriott. *England since Waterloo.*

Other useful histories are:

- Ramsay Muir. *Short History of the British Commonwealth.* 2 vols.
* G. M. Trevelyan. *History of England.*
Political History of England. 12 vols., published by Longmans.
* Fletcher. *Introductory History of England.* 5 vols. A very lively narrative.
Mackinder. *Britain and the British Seas.* An historical geography.

II. SPECIAL ASPECTS.

(a) Social life.

- * † M. and C. Quennell's series depicting everyday life through the ages: profusely illustrated with line-drawings by the authors, and most attractive.

Everyday Life in Roman Britain.
Everyday Life in Saxon, Viking and Norman Times.
Everyday Things in England. 2 vols.

- * † H. D. Traill. *Social England.* Excellently and fully illustrated.
Stanley Leathes. *The People in the Making, The People in Adventure, and The People on its Trial.* A history of the English people viewed mainly from the social and economic side, written specially for young readers, and illustrated.

Waters. *Economic History of England*. Illustrated.
 Morris and Wood. *The Golden Fleece*. History of wool trade.
 Wood and Wilmore. *Romance of English Cotton Industry*.
 Townsend Warner. *Landmarks in English Industrial History*.

(b) Military, etc.

Fortescue. *History of the British Army*. A very exhaustive and highly interesting work. 12 vols. up to 1852 and still to be completed.

† H. Belloc. *Warfare in England*. A brief, readable survey, treated from a geographical standpoint.

* † Ashdown. *British and Foreign Aims and Armours*. Well illustrated.
 Ffoulkes. *Armour and Weapons*.

Hannay. *Short History of the Royal Navy*.

(c) European and Colonial, etc.

Seeley. *Expansion of England*. Essays on Colonial policy.

Lecky. *History of Ireland*.

Williamson. *Builders of the Empire*.

† D. H. Lawrence. *Moments in European History*. An attractive series of sketches of the main episodes in European history, picturesquely told by one of the leading English novelists.

H. G. Wells. *Outline of History*. A brilliant, though tendential, outline of world history, by a leading novelist.

(d) Sources, etc.

Colby. *Selections from the Sources of English History*.

Cheyney. *Readings in English History*.

Morgan and Bailey. *Readings in English History from Original Sources*. 4 vols.

* † *Historical Portraits*. 4 vols. Clarendon Press. A beautiful series of reproductions with brief biographical notes.

(e) Literary.

Oxford Book of English Verse }
Oxford Book of English Prose } Admirable selections.
Oxford Book of Ballads }

Andrew Lang. *History of English Literature*.

Cambridge Readings in English Literature. Well-chosen selections of prose and verse.

(f) Fiction.

* Buchan. *The Path of the King*. A series of sketches of historical episodes.

* Kipling. *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*. A series of sketches of historical episodes.

* H. Belloc. *The Eye Witness*. A series of sketches of historical episodes.

B. ROMAN OCCUPATION TO END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

I. GENERAL.

* † H. W. C. Davis. *Mediæval England*. Dealing with armour, heraldry, architecture, etc., and profusely illustrated.

† Oman. *Art of War in the Middle Ages*. An invaluable work, treating the principal battles at some length.

II. ROMAN BRITAIN.

- Collingwood. *Roman Britain*. Archæological evidence.
 * † Kipling. *Puck of Pook's Hill*. Imaginative description of life on the Roman wall.
 Mothersole. *Roman Britain*.
 Church. *Count of the Saxon Shore*. Novel.
 Malory. *Morte d'Arthur*. Giving the mediæval legend of the last stand made by the British against the Saxon invaders.
 Tennyson. *Idylls of the King*. Reproducing the same in verse.

III. ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.

- Lees. *Alfred*. Biography.
 J. Mothersole. *The Saxon Shore*.
 Bede. *Ecclesiastical History*. Translated.
Norse Sagas. Various editions.
 W. Morris. *Earthly Paradise*. Telling the tale of several sagas in verse.
 Crake. *Edwy the Fair*. Novel of Dunstan's time.
 Crake. *Alfgar the Dane*. Novel of Cnut's time.
 Lytton. *Harold*. Historical novel.

IV. NORMAN AND ANGEVIN PERIOD.

- Freeman. *William the Conqueror*. Biography.
 Stenton. *William the Conqueror*.
 Church. *Anselm*.
 Mrs. Green. *Henry II*. Biography.
 Kingsley. *Hereward the Wake*. Historical novel.
 Scott. *Ivanhoe*. Historical novel.
 Blake. *Siege of Norwich Castle*.
 Baring Gould. *Pablo the Priest*.
 Edgar. *Runnymede and Lincoln Fair*.

V. CRUSADES.

- de Joinville. *Memoirs of the Crusades*.
 Ed. by Archer. *Crusade of Richard I*.
 * Newbolt. *The Happy Warrior*. Episodes simply and attractively told in praise of chivalry.
 Scott. *Talisman*. Historical novel.
 M. Hewlett. *Richard Yea and Nay*. Historical novel.

VI. PLANTAGENET PERIOD.

- Tout. *Edward I*. Biography.
 Bateson. *Mediæval England*.
 Pollard. *Evolution of Parliament*.

VII. PEASANTS' REVOLT.

- † G. M. Trevelyan. *England in the Days of Wycliff*.
 * † W. Morris. *Dream of John Ball*. An imaginary episode of the period, romantically told.

VIII. THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

- Kingsford. *Henry V*. Biography.
Froissart's Chronicles. Translated.
 * Newbolt. *Happy Warrior*. (See above.)
 Conan Doyle. *White Company*. Novel.
 † Bernard Shaw. *St. Joan*. Prose drama.

- Mark Twain. *Joan of Arc*. A sympathetic narrative of her life.
 Conan Doyle. *Sir Nigel*. Novel.
 Baring Gould. *Noemi*.
 Scott. *Fair Maid of Perth*. Reign of Henry IV.

IX. WARS OF THE ROSES.

- R. L. Stevenson. *Black Arrow*. Novel.
 Lytton. *The Last of the Barons*. Novel.
 Newbolt. *The New June*. Novel.

X. ECCLESIASTICAL.

- Gasquet. *Mediæval Monasteries*.
 Cranage. *The Home of the Monk*.
 Carlyle. *Past and Present*. Study of life in a particular monastery.
 † Froude. *Short Studies*. Essays on: Life and Times of Thomas Becket;
 Annals of an English Abbey; A Bishop of the Twelfth Century.

XI. MISCELLANEOUS.

- † Jusserand. *Wayfaring Life in the 14th Century*.
 Stanley. *Memorials of Canterbury*.
 † Coulton. *Social Life in Britain from the Norman Conquest to the Reformation*. Most interesting extracts from sources somewhat off the beaten track.
 Coulton. *The Mediæval Village*.
 Bennett. *The Pastons and Their England*.
 Langland's *Piers Ploughman*. Depicting life in the fourteenth century.
 Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*.
 Coulton. *Chaucer and His England*.
 Shakespeare's *Historical Plays*.
 * Rossetti. *Ballad of the White Ship* (loss of Henry I's son at sea) and
The King's Tragedy (ballad of the murder of James I of Scotland).
 † Ford Maddox Hueffer. *Ladies whose Bright Eyes*. Novel depicting
 mediæval life with considerable realism.
 Fairless. *Gathering of Brother Hilarius*. Novel of time of Black Death.

C. TUDOR PERIOD

I. BOOKS OF GENERAL REFERENCE.

- † Froude. *History of England* (under the Tudors).
 † *Shakespeare's England*. Clarendon Press. 2 vols. A detailed study
 of life in Tudor times under every aspect. Very handsomely illus-
 trated.

II. REIGN OF HENRY VII AND HENRY VIII.

- † Pollard. *Henry VIII*. Biography.
 Creighton. *Wolsey*. Biography.
 Pollard. *Cranmer*. Biography.
 † Froude. *Short Studies*. Essays on the "Dissolution of the Monas-
 teries" and on the "Times of Erasmus and Luther."
 Motley. *Rise of the Dutch Republic*.
 Harrison Ainsworth. *Windsor Castle*. Historical novel.
 Scott. *Marmion*. Poem of Flodden.
 Reade. *The Cloister and the Hearth*. Novel of the Early Renaissance.
 Scott. *Quentin Durward and Anne of Geierstein*. Novels of the time
 of Henry VII.

III. REIGNS OF EDWARD AND MARY.

- Mark Twain. *The Prince and the Pauper*. Time of Northumberland.
 R. H. Benson. *The Queen's Tragedy*. Historical novel.
 H. Ainsworth. *The Tower of London*. Historical novel.

IV. REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

- Creighton. *Elizabeth*. Biography.
 Beesly. *Elizabeth*. Biography.
 Cowan. *Knox*. Biography.
 Rodd. *Raleigh*. Biography.
 Hay Fleming. *Mary Queen of Scots*. Also biography by MacCunn.
 * Scott. *Tales of a Grandfather*. The story of Mary Stuart simply told.
 † J. Drinkwater. *Mary Stuart*. Prose drama.
 James. *Darnley*.
 Scott. *Kenilworth*. Historical novels of Elizabethan England.
 Scott. *The Abbott and The Monastery*. Novels of Scotland in the time of Mary Stuart.
 Weyman. *Gentleman of France*. Novel.
 Corbett. *For God and Gold*.

V. MARITIME.

- Hakluyt's *Voyages*.
 * † Froude. *English Seaman*, which includes the story of the Armada.
 * † Corbett. *Francis Drake*. Biography.
 * Kingsley. *Westward Ho*. Novel.
 Tennyson. *The Revenge*. Ballad of a sea battle.

VI. LITERARY.

- Pollard. *Records of the English Bible*.
 The Plays of Shakespeare.
 † Marlowe. *Dr. Faustus*. Drama.
 Raleigh. *Shakespeare*. A critical study of his life and work.
 Bacon's *Essays*.
 † Quiller Couch. *Shakespeare's Workmanship*.

D. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

I. BOOKS OF GENERAL REFERENCE.

- † Nichol Smith. *Characters of the 17th Century*. A selection of character sketches drawn from contemporary sources.
 † Macaulay. *History of England*. 1685-1702. Edited by Firth. 6 vols. Illustrated.
 Parkes. *Travel in England in the 17th Century*. Fully illustrated.

II. REIGN OF JAMES I.

- W. Scott. *Fortunes of Nigel*. Novel.
 H. Ainsworth. *Guy Fawkes*. Novel.
 H. Ainsworth. *Lincolnshire Witches*. Novel.

III. REIGN OF CHARLES I. AND THE COMMONWEALTH.

- Duncan Tower.. *Archibishop Laud*.
Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson.
Memoirs of Verney Family during the Civil Wars. 4 vols.
 † Harrison. *Cromwell*. Biography.
 Firth. *Cromwell*. Biography.
 Firth. *Cromwell's Army*.

- Gardiner. *Cromwell's Place in History*. Short essay.
 † J. Drinkwater. *Oliver Cromwell*. Prose drama.
 Traill. *Strafford*. Biography.
 Browning. *Strafford*. Drama.
 Defoe. *Memoirs of a Cavalier*.
 Macaulay. *Essay on Milton*. A study of the Puritans.
 Buchan. *Marquis of Montrose*. Biography.
 Penney. *Journal of George Fox*.
 Dumas. *Twenty Years After*. Novel.
 Shorthouse. *John Inglesant*. Novel.
 Scott. *Legend of Montrose*. Novel.

IV. REIGN OF CHARLES II.

- O. Airy. *Charles II*.
 J. Drinkwater. *Mr. Charles*. Biographical sketch.
 * † Defoe. *Journal of the Plague*.
 † Dryden. *Absalom and Achitophel*. Political satire in verse.
 Scott. *Woodstock and Old Mortality*. Novels.
 Conan Doyle. *The Refugees*. Novel.
 Ainsworth. *Old St. Pauls*. Novel.
 Crockett. *Men of the Moss Hags*. Novel.
 Anthony Hope. *Simon Dale*. Novel.

V. REIGN OF JAMES II.

- Blackmore. *Lorna Doone*. Novel touching on Sedgemoor.
 Conan Doyle. *Micah Clarke*. Novel touching on Sedgemoor.

VI. REIGN OF WILLIAM III.

- Traill. *William III*. Biography.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS.

- Milton's *Poems*.
 Bunyan. *Pilgrim's Progress*.
 Evelyn's *Diary*.
 † Pepys. *Everybody's Pepys*. Abridged edition by Morshead Bell.
 * † Aytoun. *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*.
 Dumas. *Three Musketeers*. Illustrating France of first half of century.
 Stanley Weyman. *Under the Red Robe*. Illustrating France of second half of century.
 Masfield. *Captain Margaret*. Novel of sea adventure.

E. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO WATERLOO

I. BOOKS OF GENERAL REFERENCE.

- Lecky. *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*.
 † Turbeville. *English Men and Manners of the 18th Century*. Fully illustrated.
 Thackeray. *Four Georges*. A chatty chronicle.
 Seeley. *Expansion of England*. Dealing with colonial problems.
 Whibley. *Political Studies of 18th and 19th Centuries*.

II. REIGN OF ANNE.

- Atkinson. *Marlborough*.
 † Macaulay. *Essay on Addison*.
 * † Thackeray. *Esmond*. Historical novel of Marlborough's wars, etc.
 Weyman. *Wild Geese*. Novel of Irish life during early 18th century.

III. REIGNS OF GEORGE I AND GEORGE II.

- Morley. *Walpole*. Biography.
 † Macaulay. *Essay on Frederic the Great*.
 † F. Harrison. *Chatham*. Biography.
 Basil Williams. *William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*.
 Wilson. *Clive*. Biography.
 * † Macaulay. *Essay on Clive*.
 † Bradley. *The Fight with France for North America*.
 † Bradley. *Wolfe*. Biography.
 Buchan. *Midwinter*. Novel touching on the Forty-five.
 Scott. *Tales of a Grandfather*.
 Broster. *The Flight of the Heron*. Novel of time after the Forty-five.
 Broster. *The Gleam in the North*.
 Scott. *Heart of Midlothian*. Novel of Scotland in Walpole's time.
 Scott. *Rob Roy*. The rebellion of Fifteen.
 Ainsworth. *St. James*. The rebellion of Fifteen.
 Scott. *Waverley*. Novel of time of the Forty-five.

IV. REIGN OF GEORGE III.

- Rosebery. *William Pitt*. Biography.
 † Macaulay. *Essay on Warren Hastings*.
 Lyall. *Warren Hastings*. Biography.
 G. O. Trevelyan. *Early History of Charles James Fox*.
 Stirling. *Coke of Norfolk and His Friends*.
 Coupland. *Wilberforce*.
 † Fortescue. *British Statesmen of the Great War*.
 Southey. *Life of Wesley*. Also *Wesley's Journal*.
 Woodforde. *Diary of a Country Parson*.

V. MILITARY.

- Oman. *Wellington's Army*.
 H. Fisher. *Napoleon*. A brief biographical study.
 Rose. *Napoleon*. Biography.
 † Fortescue. *Wellington*. Biography.
 † Southey. *Nelson*. Biography.
 Ludwig. *Napoleon*.
 Napier. *Peninsular War*. A contemporary account.
 * † Fitchett. *Deeds that Won the Empire*. Picturesque narrative of episodes such as the taking of Quebec, etc.
 * † Fitchett. *How England Saved Europe*. 4 vols. A picturesque narrative of the Napoleonic wars.
 Masfield. *Sea Life in Nelson's Time*.
 † H. Newbolt. *The Year of Trafalgar*.
 † H. Belloc. *Blenheim, Malplaquet and Waterloo*. Three short monographs.

VI. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

- † L. Madelin. *The French Revolution*. Translated from the French and probably the best account extant in one volume.
 Carlyle. *French Revolution*. Picturesque, but somewhat rhetorical in style.
 Bradby. *French Revolution*.
 Belloc. *French Revolution*. A short account.
 † Belloc. *Marie Antoinette*. The story of the Revolution dramatically told from the standpoint of the queen. Also *Danton and Robespierre*.
 Dickens. *Tale of Two Cities*. Novel.

- Belloc. *The Girondin*. Novel.
 Weyman. *The Red Cockade*. Novel.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS.

- Boswell. *Life of Johnson*.
 Macaulay. *Essay on Boswell's Life of Johnson*.
 † J. Bailey. *Dr. Johnson and His Circle*. Short and attractive study.
 Thackeray. *The Virginians*. Novel of colonial life.
 Thackeray. *Vanity Fair*. Novel of time of Waterloo.
 T. Hardy. *Trumpet Major*. Novel of time of Waterloo.
 O. Goldsmith. *Vicar of Wakefield*. Novel of country life.
 G. Eliot. *Adam Bede*. Novel of country life, dealing specially with the Methodists.
 J. Austen's novels.
 Sheridan. *Rivals and School for Scandal*. Prose comedies dealing with end of the 18th century.
 Dickens. *Barnaby Rudge*. Novel dealing with Lord George Gordon riots.
 T. Hardy. *The Dynasts*. A sort of dramatic epic dealing with episodes of the Napoleonic wars.
 Olivant. *The Gentleman*. Tale of sea adventure in the Napoleonic wars.
 Marryat. *Masterman Ready*. Sea adventure in this era.
 Conan Doyle. *Rodney Stone*. Novel of prize fighting, etc., about the beginning of the 19th century.
 Thackeray. *The Virginians*. Novel of colonial life in Seven Years' War.
 Cooper. *The Last of the Mohicans*. Novel of colonial life in Seven Years' War.
 Stevenson. *Master of Ballantrae, Kidnapped, and Catriona*.
 Churchill. *Richard Carvel*. Novel of American War of Independence.
 Merriman. *Boulash of the Guard*. Novel of the retreat from Moscow.
 Lever. *Charles O'Malley*. Novel of Peninsular War.
 V. Hugo. *Les Misérables*. Novel of the Hundred Days' epoch.

F. NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

I. BOOKS OF GENERAL REFERENCE.

- † Trevelyan. *British History in the 19th Century*.
 Fyffe. *Modern Europe*. A fairly full record of European history, continued 1878-1920 by G. P. Gooch.
 Hearnshaw. *Main Currents of European History, 1815-1915*. A good outline of movements and events.

II. BIOGRAPHICAL.

- † Lytton Strachey. *Queen Victoria*.
 † Lytton Strachey. *Eminent Victorians*. Studies of Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, and General Gordon.
 † Trevelyan. *Lord Grey and the Reform Bill*.
 Trevelyan. *Life of John Bright*.
 Thursfield. *Peel*.
 † A. Maurois. *Disraeli*. A study.
 D. Somerville. *Disraeli and Gladstone*.
 Morley. *Life of Gladstone*.
 Cook. *Deane of the Times*.
 Cecil. *British Foreign Ministers*.
 † L. Housman. *Angels and Ministers*. Short prose plays depicting Disraeli and Gladstone and Queen Victoria.

- † Drinkwater. *Abraham Lincoln*. Prose drama.
 † G. H. Blore. *Victorian Worthies*. Studies of Victorians great in politics, philanthropy, art, letters, etc.
 Butler. *Gordon*.
 B. Williams. *Cecil Rhodes*.

III. MILITARY, ETC.

- Kinglake. *Crimean War*. A full account very finely written.
 † Trevelyan. *Garibaldi and the Defence of the Roman Republic*.
 † Trevelyan. *Garibaldi and the Thousand*.
 † Trevelyan. *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy*.
 Temple. *Life of Lord Lawrence*.
 * Fitchett. *Tales of the Mutiny*.
 G. O. Trevelyan. *Cawnpore*.
 Lumsden. *Story of the Guides*.
 Conan Doyle. *The Boer War*.
 † Winston Churchill. *The World Crisis*. 3 vols. An account of the Great War, told by one of its leading statesmen in very attractive style.
 * † Masfield. *Gallipoli*.
 † T. E. Lawrence. *The Revolt in the Desert*. Story of the rising of the Arab against the Turks during the Great War, told by the man who helped to lead it.

IV. SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL, ETC.

- Cobbett. *Rural Rider*. A picture of rural England at the beginning of the century.
 Hovell. *Chartist Movement*.
 † Hammond. *Town Labourer, Village Labourer, Skilled Labourer, and Rise of Modern Industry*. Interesting studies in the early effects of the Industrial Revolution.
 Church. *Oxford Movement*.
 † Ruskin. *Unto this Last*. A protest against the economic theories of the Manchester school.
 Weyman. *Chippinge*. Novel of time of Reform Bill.
 Kingsley. *Yeast and Two Years Ago*. Novels depicting the misery and unrest of the working classes.
 Trollope. *Castle Richmond*. Novel of time of Corn Law's repeal.
 Disraeli. *Coningsby*. Political novel. Also *Sibyl*.
 Dickens. *Pickwick Papers*.
 Dickens. *Little Dorrit*. Life in a debtor's prison.
 Dickens. *Oliver Twist*. Life in a workhouse.
 Dickens. *Nicholas Nickleby*. Life in a private school.
 Hughes. *Tom Brown's School Days*. Life in a public school.
 Gaskell. *North and South*. Novel.
 Thackeray. *The Newcomes*. Early Victorian society.
 Trollope. *Barchester Towers*. Mid-Victorian society.
 Galsworthy. *The Forsyte Saga*. Late Victorian society.
 George Eliot. *Middlemarch*. Victorian country life.
 T. Hardy. *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Rural life.
 T. Hardy. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Rural life.
 Fortescue. *My Native Devon*.
 Kingsley. *Ravenshoe*. A novel of time of Crimea.
 Tolstoy. *Sebastopol*. Story of the siege.
 † W. H. Page. *Letters*. Depicting English society during the Great War.
 † G. K. Chesterton. *The Victorian Age in Literature*. A brief but stimulating study.

THE RULERS OF ENGLAND¹

SINCE THE NORMAN CONQUEST

NAME		Accession	Died	Age	Reigned
THE HOUSE OF NORMANDY					
William I.	Obtained Crown by conquest.	1066	1087	60	21
William II.	Third son of William I.	1087	1100	40	13
Henry I.	Youngest son of William I.	1100	1135	67	35
Stephen.	Third son of Stephen, Count of Blois, by Adela, fourth daughter of William I.	1135	1154	60	19
THE HOUSE OF PLANTAGENET					
Henry II.	Son of Geoffrey Plantagenet, by Matilda, only daughter of Henry I.	1154	1189	56	35
Richard I.	Eldest surviving son of Henry II.	1189	1199	42	10
John.	Sixth and youngest son of Henry II.	1199	1216	49	17
Henry III.	Eldest son of John.	1216	1272	65	56
Edward I.	Eldest son of Henry III.	1272	1307	68	35
Edward II.	Eldest surviving son of Edward I.	1307	1327	43	20
Edward III.	Eldest son of Edward II.	1327	1377	65	50
Richard II.	Son of the Black Prince, eldest son of Edward III. (Deposed 1399)	1377	1400	34	22
THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER					
Henry IV.	Son of John of Gaunt, 4th son of Edward III.	1399	1413	47	14
Henry V.	Eldest son of Henry IV.	1413	1422	34	9
Henry VI.	Only son of Henry V. (Deposed 1461)	1422	1471	49	39
THE HOUSE OF YORK					
Edward IV.	His grandfather was Richard, son of Edmund, 5th son of Edward III, and his grandmother, Anne, was great-granddaughter of Lionel, third son of Edward III.	1461	1483	41	22
Edward V.	Eldest son of Edward IV.	1483	1483	13	0
Richard III.	Younger brother of Edward IV.	1483	1485	35	2
THE HOUSE OF TUDOR					
Henry VII.	Son of Edmund, eldest son of Owen Tudor, by Katherine, widow of Henry V; his mother, Margaret Beaufort, was great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt.	1485	1509	53	24
Henry VIII.	Only surviving son of Henry VII.	1509	1547	56	38
Edward VI.	Son of Henry VIII, by Jane Seymour.	1547	1553	16	6
Mary I.	Daughter of Henry VIII, by Catharine of Aragon.	1553	1558	42	5
Elizabeth.	Daughter of Henry VIII, by Anne Boleyn.	1558	1603	70	45
THE HOUSE OF STUART					
James I.	Son of Mary Queen of Scots, granddaughter of James IV and Margaret, daughter of Henry VII.	1603	1625	59	22
Charles I.	Only surviving son of James I.	1625	1649	48	24
COMMONWEALTH DECLARED MAY 19, 1649					
Cromwells.	Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector.	1653	1658	59	
	Richard Cromwell, Lord Protector, resigned May 25, 1659.	1658	1712	86	
THE HOUSE OF STUART (Restored)					
Charles II.	Eldest son of Charles I.	1660	1685	55	25
James II.	Second son of Charles I. (Deposed 1688. Interregnum Dec. 11, 1688, to Feb. 13, 1689)	1685	1701	68	3
William III.	Son of William Prince of Orange, by Mary, daughter of Charles I.	1689	1702	51	13
Mary II.	Eldest daughter of James II, and wife of William III.		1694	32	6
Anne.	Second daughter of James II.		1714	49	12
THE HOUSE OF HANOVER					
George I.	Son of Elector of Hanover, by Sophia, daughter of Elizabeth, daughter of James I.	1714	1727	67	13
George II.	Only son of George I.	1727	1760	77	33
George III.	Grandson of George II.	1760	1820	82	60
George IV.	Eldest son of George III.	1820	1830	68	10
William IV.	Third son of George III.	1830	1837	72	7
Victoria.	Daughter of Edward, Duke of Kent, 4th son of George III.	1837	1901	81	63
THE HOUSE OF SAXE-COEBURG					
Edward VII.	Eldest son of Victoria.	1901	1910	68	9
THE HOUSE OF WINDSOR					
George V.	Second and surviving son of Edward VII.	1910			

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Elizabeth II 1952 25
daughter
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See V

THE PRIME MINISTERS OF ENGLAND

Sir Robert Walpole, 1721-1742	Viscount Melbourne, 1834
Lord John Carteret, 1742-1744	Sir Robert Peel, 1834-1835
Henry Pelham, 1744-1754	Viscount Melbourne, 1835-1841
Duke of Newcastle, 1754-1756	Sir Robert Peel, 1841-1846
Duke of Devonshire and William Pitt, 1756-1757	Lord John Russell, 1846-1852
William Pitt and the Duke of Newcastle, 1757-1762	Earl of Derby, 1852
Earl of Bute, 1762-1763	Earl of Aberdeen, 1852-1855
George Grenville, 1763-1765	Viscount Palmerston, 1855-1858
Marquis of Rockingham, 1765-1766	Earl of Derby, 1858-1859
William Pitt (Earl of Chatham), 1766-1767	Viscount Palmerston, 1859-1865
Duke of Grafton, 1767-1770	Earl Russell, 1865-1866
Lord North, 1770-1782	Earl of Derby, 1866-1868
Marquis of Rockingham, 1782	Benjamin Disraeli, 1868
Earl of Shelburne, 1782-1783	William Ewart Gladstone, 1868-1874
Duke of Portland, Lord North, and Charles Fox (Coalition Ministry), 1783.	Benjamin Disraeli (Earl of Beaconsfield), 1874-1880
William Pitt (the Younger), 1783-1801	William Ewart Gladstone, 1880-1885
Henry Addington (Viscount Sidmouth), 1801-1804	Marquis of Salisbury, 1885-1886
William Pitt, 1804-1806	William Ewart Gladstone, 1886
Lord William Grenville (Ministry of All the Talents), 1806-1807	Marquis of Salisbury, 1886-1892
Duke of Portland, 1807-1809	William Ewart Gladstone, 1892-1894
Spencer Perceval, 1809-1812	Earl of Rosebery, 1894-1895
Earl of Liverpool, 1812-1827	Marquis of Salisbury, 1895-1902
George Canning, 1827	Arthur James Balfour, 1902-1905
Viscount Goderich, 1827-1828	Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, 1905- 1908
Duke of Wellington, 1828-1830	Herbert Henry Asquith, 1908-1916
Earl Grey, 1830-1834	David Lloyd George, 1916-1922
	Bonar Law, 1922-1923
	Stanley Baldwin, 1923-1924
	Ramsay J. MacDonald, 1924
	Stanley Baldwin, 1924-

William Churchill
noted
Harold Macmillan
Sir Douglas Hogg
Harold Wilson

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